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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE FATE OF MENNONITES IN SOVIET UKRAINE AND THE CRIMEA ON THE EVE OF THE "SECOND REVOLUTION" (1927-1929)

BY

COLIN PETER NEUFELDT ©

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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THE FATE OF MENNONITES
IN SOVIET UKRAINE AND THE CRIMEA
ON THE EVE OF THE "SECOND REVOLUTION" (1927-1929)

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "The Fate of Mennonites in Soviet Ukraine and the Crimea on the Eve of the 'Second Revolution' (1927-1929)" submitted by Colin Peter Neufeldt in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

John-Paul Himka
Supervisor

David C. Johnson

Date: April 19, 1989

To Lynette, Ella, Peter, Linda, and Abe

Abstract

During the dictatorship of Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea suffered many hardships and tribulations, including the loss of their economic, political, social, and religious institutions. This study endeavors to investigate the Soviet Mennonite experiences of hardship and loss under Stalin's reign from late 1927 to late 1929. These were the preparatory years of dekulakization and collectivization (1928-1933), and the prelude to the period of the famine (1932-1933).

After a brief discussion of the establishment of the Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea, the study examines the Soviet regime's initial attempts to collectivize the Mennonite peasantry in 1928 and 1929. This examination includes an analysis of the Mennonites' responses to these attempts and the economic, political, social, and religious repercussions of the Soviet measures. Particular attention is given to the excessively high grain quotas, continually rising taxes, and the mercurial commodity prices that together contributed to the eventual elimination of almost all individual farming operations within the Mennonite communities. The study also examines how disenfranchisement and changes in the rules of village commune meetings destroyed all Mennonite hopes for limited political self-determination that had previous existed during the New

Economic Policy. A large part of the thesis also investigates the manner in which the Mennonite community responded to the new Soviet measures and laws that promoted atheistic propoganda campaigns, encouraged the eradication of religion from the schools, allowed the closure of churches, and permitted the arrest and exile of Mennonite clergymen. In order to escape the increasingly oppressive government-sponsored measures of 1928 and 1929, some Mennonites endeavored to flee to the West via China; thousands of others, however, went to Moscow in a last ditch-effort to obtain emigration visas to move to Canada. The last part of the thesis examines the common plight of those Mennonites who tried to leave the Soviet Union and the terrible experiences of those who were not successful in their efforts.

Preface

One area of Soviet history that continues to incite heated debate among historians is the plight of the Soviet peasantry during the years of collectivization and famine between 1928 and 1933. There is considerable disagreement among historians concerning the role of the dekulakization and collectivization campaigns in Soviet history, the manner in which the peasants reacted to the campaigns, and the positive and negative effects of the campaigns on the peasantry. Historians are also at loggerheads with respect to the total number of peasants who lost their lives as a result of the dekulakization and collectivization campaigns and the subsequent famine. From the burgeoning number of recently published works on this subject, it appears that the historiographical debate on this violent and chaotic period of Soviet history will continue to exist for many years to come.

This present study attempts to make a positive contribution to the current debate on the history of the Soviet peasantry during the turbulent years of 1928-1933. Unlike most other studies, which tend to focus on the Soviet peasantry in general, this study focuses on the political, economic, religious, and social factors that affected the experiences of one specific group of peasants -- the Soviet Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea. This study does not claim to cover all aspects of the Soviet Mennonite experience between 1927 and 1929, but focuses on the Mennonites' response to the Soviet regime's initial attempts to collectivize the peasantry in 1928 and 1929. The research on this tumultuous period of Soviet Mennonite history is simultaneously a microanalysis of Soviet history on the eve of Stalin's "Second Revolution," shedding light on the Soviet regime's approach to dekulakization and collectivization, its antagonistic attitude toward the Soviet peasantry, and its adventuresome economic and agricultural policies. In this respect the thesis not only provides some answers to important questions concerning the Soviet Mennonite experience between late 1927 and late 1929, but also provides some insight on the experience of Soviet peasants in general.

The sources consulted for this thesis include primary and secondary materials written in German and English. The incorporation of materials written in Ukrainian and Russian was not necessary for a number of reasons: the overwhelming majority of extant documents written by and about the Soviet Mennonites are in German; there is a dearth of available historical works and Soviet government documents in Ukrainian or Russian that deal specifically with the Mennonites; and there are a number of excellent works written in German and English that deal with general events affecting the Ukrainian and Russian peasantry during the period under discussion in a comprehensive manner. Most of the German and English resources incorporated into this study are primary sources that generally fall into four different categories. One of these categories includes memoirs and diaries written by Soviet Mennonites. Many of these memoirs and diaries are reflective accounts that provide useful information on the personal responses of Mennonite peasants to the tragic circumstances that surrounded them. A second type of primary source material that proved indispensable in this study was the multitude of contemporary letters that were written by Soviet Mennonites, sent to relatives in Europe and North America, and subsequently published in Canadian and American Mennonite newspapers such as *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, *Der Bote*, and *Zionsbote*. Most of these letters are graphic, first-hand descriptions of the atrocities and violence that occurred in Soviet Mennonite communities during the period in question. The *Captured German War Documents* comprise the third category of primary sources. These documents, which include village reports that were prepared for a special Nazi commando unit during the German occupation of Ukraine from 1941 to 1944, contain exhaustive and indispensable data on the political, economic, social, and religious institutions of the Mennonite community in Ukraine between 1928 and 1941. The last type of primary sources utilized in this analysis consist of reports written by B. H. Unruh, one of the leading spokesmen for the Soviet Mennonites in Western Europe. In the reports are letters from Soviet Mennonites that were sent to Unruh, as well as Unruh's analysis of the relief and emigration efforts of various Mennonite and non-Mennonite groups on behalf of the Soviet Mennonites. These reports also serve as indicators of the extent of information at the disposal of European and North American Mennonites concerning their co-religionists in Ukraine and the Crimea.

A brief comment on the place names cited in this thesis is also in order. The German form of a place name preferred by the Mennonites has generally been used for those localities within the broad region of Mennonite settlement; Russian and Ukrainian forms of place names have generally been cited for those cities and villages located outside the regions populated by the Mennonites.

As in all studies great and small, acknowledgments and thanks are due to a number of people who, in various ways, assisted me in the preparation of this thesis. I wish to thank the personnel at the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada (Winnipeg, Manitoba), the Mennonite Heritage Centre (Winnipeg, Manitoba), the library of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College (Winnipeg, Manitoba), and the library of the Canadian Mennonite Bible College (Winnipeg, Manitoba). Their assistance in retrieving primary and secondary source materials for my research is very much appreciated. Heartfelt acknowledgments are also due to Dr. John B. Toews (Regent College), Dr. George Epp (University of Winnipeg), and Dr. Harry Loewen (University of Winnipeg) who generously shared their knowledge and resources on various topics related to this study. I would especially like to express my gratitude to my graduate supervisor, Dr. John-Paul Himka (University of Alberta), who provided expert guidance, advice, and help throughout the preparation of this manuscript. His knowledge of Ukrainian and Russian history has been an enriching source of inspiration over the past two years. A special note of thanks is also due to my wife, Lynette Toews-Neufeldt, who not only encouraged and supported me throughout my graduate studies, but also took time from her own graduate studies to provide invaluable assistance in the preparation of this manuscript. Her advice and comments improved the final product considerably, but naturally responsibility for the opinions expressed and for any errors or shortcomings in the work is entirely mine.

Edmonton, Alberta
January 1989

C.P.N.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMLV -- *Allrussischer Mennonitischer Landwirtschaftlicher Verein* (All-Russian Mennonite Agricultural Union): A Soviet Mennonite organization that made petitions to the Soviet government concerning the political, commercial, and agricultural concerns of Soviet Mennonites outside Ukraine

CGWD -- *Captured German War Documents*: A collection of village reports dealing with the political, economic, social, and religious life of various Soviet German and Mennonite villages in Ukraine and the Crimea during the interwar period and the first years of World War II. These village reports were prepared by "Kommando Dr. Stumpp," a special forces German commando unit which was established by "Der Reichsminister für die besetzten Ostgebiete" and which was stationed in Ukraine during the Nazi occupation between 1941 and 1943.

DB -- *Der Bote*: A weekly newspaper published by the Canadian Conference of Mennonites in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

KfK -- *Kommission für Kirchenangelegenheiten* (Commission for Church Affairs): A Soviet Mennonite organization that addressed the religious concerns of Soviet Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea

MR -- *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*: A weekly newspaper published by the Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

VBHH -- *Verband der Bürger Holländischer Herkunft* (Union of the Citizens of Dutch Lineage): A Soviet Mennonite organization that made petitions to the Soviet government concerning the political, commercial, and agricultural concerns of Soviet Mennonites in Ukraine

ZB -- *Zionsbote*: A weekly newspaper published by the North American Mennonite Brethren Conference in Hillsboro, Kansas, U.S.A.

List of Weights and Measures

1 archine: 28 inches or 71.12 centimeters

1 dessiatine: 2.698 acres or 1.092 hectares

1 doppelcentner or doppelzentner: 1 quintal or 220.46 pounds or 100 kilograms

1 Faden: 1 fathom or 6 feet or 1.829 meters

1 Fuder: 1 cartload

1 hectare: 2.47 acres

1 pood: 36.1 pounds or 16.41 kilograms

Reaumur Scale: the thermometric scale in which the zero point corresponds to the temperature of melting ice and 80 degrees to the temperature of boiling water. Note: x degrees Reaumur = (5/4 x) degrees Celsius.

Degrees Reaumur		Degrees Celsius
80	=	100
40	=	50
8	=	10
0	=	0
- 8	=	-10
-16	=	-20
-24	=	-30
-32	=	-40
-40	=	-50

1 verst: 3,520 feet or 1.067 kilometers

1 zentner or centner: 110.23 pounds or 50 kilograms

1 zoll: 1 inch

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Chapter I

* * * * *

The Mennonite Community in Ukraine and the Crimea Prior to 1928: A History of the Community's Origins, Achievements, and Institutions

No event or period in the history of the Mennonite community's sojourn in Ukraine and Crimea has so profoundly altered, disrupted, and devastated the community as the period of dekulakization, collectivization, and famine. Unlike any other period of crisis and change, the turbulent and often brutal years between 1928 and 1933 affected the Soviet Mennonite community to such an extent that very few of its economic, social, political and religious institutions still remained intact by the mid-1930's. The years of dekulakization, collectivization, and famine also destroyed many of the institutions and achievements that were tangible expressions of the community's sense of peoplehood and ethnic identity; as a result, very few Mennonites were able to continue observing and practicing the traditions and creeds that had previously kept many of the community's precepts of ethnicity and peoplehood alive for generations. The loss of these institutions was tantamount to the destruction of the foundations upon which the Mennonite community stood as a united people. In attempting to understand what cultural, social, political, economic, and religious sacrifices the

Mennonite community had to make during the first Five-Year Plan, it is necessary to describe briefly what social, economic, political, and religious achievements and institutions the Mennonites had made prior to 1928. Only by examining the history of the Mennonite community in southern Russia prior to 1928 can a context for the traumatic events that the Soviet Mennonite community experienced afterwards be established. Such a context will in turn help to explain the way in which the community reacted and dealt with events that would ultimately lead to the destruction of their independent colonies in Ukraine and the Crimea.

The Soviet Mennonites belonged to a community whose historical roots in Russian soil stretched back to the late eighteenth century. Their forefathers, who first settled in Ukraine in the late 1780's and early 1790's, were the Prussian descendants of Dutch Anabaptists who began to migrate to Prussia and Poland in the 1530's after they were persecuted by the Catholic and Protestant churches for their radical religious beliefs (adult baptism on confession of faith, the priesthood of all believers, the separation of church and state, and nonresistance). For two hundred years the Mennonite community in Poland and Prussia prospered and thrived until religious developments, political events, and economic restrictions in the middle of the eighteenth century seriously threatened the identity and future existence of the Mennonite community in Poland and Prussia.[1] When Catherine II of Russia made an offer of land and special economic and religious privileges to the Prussian Mennonites in 1788, the offer was viewed by some Mennonites as a manifestation of divine providence. After obtaining all of the privileges that would be necessary for them to control their own religious, civic, and educational affairs in their future homeland, Prussian Mennonite families began to undertake the long trek to the Russian steppes with the hope of making a new and prosperous life for themselves and their families.[2]

In 1789 the first Mennonite colony in Russia, known as the Chortitza or "Old Colony," was established on the banks of the Chortitza River, a small tributary of the Dnieper River in the province of Jekaterinoslaw. By the turn of the century, fifteen villages (inhabited by approximately 400 families) had been established within the colony. In 1804 a second colony, known as the Molotschna colony, was established about seventy-five miles southeast of the Chortitza colony along the Molotschna River in the province of Taurida. By 1835 approximately 1,200 families lived in the Molotschna colony's fifty-eight villages and farmed 324,000 acres of the surrounding area.[3] High birth rates and shortages of land in the middle of the nineteenth century compelled settlers in the Chortitza and Molotschna colonies to establish "daughter colonies" both within and beyond the borders of Ukraine for their friends and relatives. Through various fund-raising programs, Mennonite farmers from the Chortitza and the Molotschna purchased large tracts of land and founded more than forty-five daughter colonies in

Ukraine, the Crimea, the Caucasus, the Urals, Siberia, and south-central Asia. Some of the larger daughter colonies in Ukraine and the Crimea included Crimea (1862), Fürstenland (1864), Borsenko (1865), Sagradovka/Kronau (1871), and Memrik (1885). By the time many of these daughter colonies were established there were considerably more Mennonites in the Russian empire than in Poland and Prussia (see Tables A and B in the Appendix).[4]

Pioneering life on the steppes of Ukraine proved to be extremely difficult for the first Mennonite settlers. Often forced to live in mud huts and sod houses, the early colonists faced many challenges in tilling and farming the virgin lands of Ukraine. With time, however, the arduous years of pioneer life gave way to years of economic prosperity. Apart from achieving great success in the breeding of livestock, the Mennonites also witnessed an agricultural revolution in the middle of the nineteenth century. The development of Black Sea ports, the introduction of a new system of crop rotation, and the European demand for Russian winter wheat motivated Mennonite colonists to devote much of their time and energy to high-quality cereal crop production.[5] The demand for grain also provided the Mennonites with an incentive to produce mechanized farm implements, and consequently, a Mennonite agricultural machinery industry emerged in the 1850's and 1860's. The Mennonites were so successful in this venture that by 1911, eight Mennonite agricultural implement factories produced 6.2 percent of the total output of agricultural machinery in all of Russia and 10 percent of all of the agricultural machinery manufactured in southern Russia. By the early twentieth century, this remarkable success in the agricultural sector, along with the development of other major industries, allowed the Mennonite community to create an almost "self-sufficient capitalist economy" which rivaled and was often superior to the economies of the native Ukrainian and non-Mennonite German settlements that surrounded it.[6]

Apart from striving for economic self-sufficiency, the Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea also endeavored to develop an autonomous socio-political system that had well-defined political, social, and religious mores, and that generally did not integrate with the surrounding Ukrainian and Russian socio-political systems. Each Mennonite village had jurisdiction over village administration, schools, taxation, roads, community projects, and the distribution of surrounding farm lands. The _Schulze_ (mayor) of each village was elected by local landowners and acted as a village administrator and as a magistrate in dealing with petty crimes. All of the _Schulzen_ in a particular _Gebiet_ (district) were accountable to an _Oberschulze_ (district superintendent). Elected by _Schulzen_, the _Oberschulze_ dealt with matters affecting all of the local villages and had the right to hold court and administer corporal punishment (only capital offenses had to be tried in the upper Russian courts). The activities of the Oberschulzen and Schulzen within the various colonies were supervised by the Fürsorge-Komitee für ausländische Kolonisten (Bureau of Colonization). This Fürsorge-Komitee, which was directly responsible to the Russian Department of the Interior, supervised all of the activities of the German colonies in Ukraine and the Crimea until the 1870's, when the political administrative systems of the colonies was dramatically changed and put under the more direct control of the Russian government.[7]

Just as the Oberschulze exerted a powerful influence in the civic affairs of the Mennonite colonies, so too his religious counterpart, the elder, exercised a strong influence in religious matters affecting Mennonite congregations. The elders, together with ministers and deacons, collectively formed a strong centralized leadership during the formative years of the Mennonite sojourn in Russia. Although the Mennonite church had traditionally operated according to egalitarian and democratic principles, harsh pioneering conditions in Russia combined with other circumstances resulted in the development of a paternalistic, authoritarian religious leadership. Many of these authoritarian religious leaders quickly allied themselves with the Mennonite self-government in the settlements and colonies; consequently, ecclesiastical and political interests were soon inextricably linked to each other. With such extensive powers the religious and civic leaders in the Mennonite colonies could single-handedly control and arbitrarily direct the social, religious, and civic affairs of the communities.[8]

Apart from the merging of ecclesiastical and civic interests, another development that affected the character of the Mennonite faith and church in many Mennonite communities in Ukraine and the Crimea was the institutionalization of religious values. Although the Russian Mennonites were still intellectually mindful of the distinguishing features of historic evangelical Anabaptism (pacifism, voluntary membership, separation of church and state, and an ethic of love), the practical expression of their Christian-Anabaptist faith was strictly governed by ecclesiastical rules and regulations. Instead of following the radical and dynamic ideals of their Anabaptist forefathers, the Russian Mennonites veered onto the pathway of creedalism and eventually adopted a Volkskirche attitude which viewed all of the members of the surrounding social and political community as members of the religious community. There were some Mennonites who rebelled against the growing institutionalization and politicization of the Mennonite church and formed splinter groups, such as the Kleine Gemeinde (1814), the Mennoniten Brüdergemeinde (1860), the Mennonite Templars or Jerusalem Friends (1863), and the Allianz-Gemeinde (1905). But these groups were unable to stem the politicization process of the Mennonite church -- a church which soon became the defender of the status quo and the preserver of tradition.[9]

What threatened to disrupt the institutionalization of the religious, political, and social systems in many Mennonite settlements and colonies in Ukraine and the Crimea were the reform, russification, and nationalization programs that the czarist government introduced in the 1860's and 1870's. While these programs emancipated the serfs and symbolized a new era of progress for the country, they proved to be a serious threat to the privileged political, religious, and legal status of the Mennonites. Some of these potentially destructive programs included the government's initiatives to have the Russian language taught in Mennonite schools and to change the regional administrative boundaries under Mennonite jurisdiction. The most threatening program for the Mennonites was the government decree that introduced universal military conscription into the country in 1870. Fearing the possible repercussions of such a decree, the Mennonites sent delegations to St. Petersburg between 1871 and 1873 in order to gain concessions on the military question. After negotiating with the Mennonites, the czarist government issued a decree in May of 1875 stating that an obligatory non-military state service program was to be established for all of the Mennonites in Russia. Years later it was decided that this non-military state service program -- which was to be completely funded by the Mennonite colonists -- was to take the form of forestry and industrial service in times of peace. For a large number of Mennonites, the decree of 1875 reflected a growing government antipathy vis-à-vis the Mennonite colonists. They felt that compulsory state service was a violation of their conscience and their historic pacifism. As a result, approximately 18,000 of these disgruntled Russian Mennonites (over thirty percent of the Mennonite population in the Russian empire) emigrated to the United States and Canada between 1874 and 1880.[10]

For those Mennonites who decided to remain in Russia and live with the russification, reform, and military-service legislation, new developments introduced changes to their traditional way of life. Ironically, the military-service legislation and the Mennonite exodus to North America brought greater economic wealth to many of the colonists still living in Ukraine and the Crimea. With the emigration of thousands of Mennonites to North America in the 1870's, land shortage problems in many colonies disappeared, and greater economic affluence resulted for many of the colonies' inhabitants. This new-found wealth led to the establishment of an unprecedented number of educational, medical, and welfare institutions (by 1914, the Russian Mennonites had set up four hundred elementary schools, thirteen secondary schools, two teachers' colleges, four trade schools, a girls' school, a school for deaf-mutes, an eight-year business school, a Bible school, a psychiatric institution, a deaconess home, as well as a number of orphanages, hospitals, mutual aid agencies, and homes for the aged). In many respects, the construction and economic support of these institutions were tangible expressions of the spiritual rebirth that had taken place in many Mennonite congregations.[11]

As it turned out, the often-prejudiced russification and nationality programs of the czarist regime, which continued until 1917, exerted many positive influences on the economic, political, and social systems of the Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea. These programs prompted the Mennonite community to establish more positive social, cultural, and political links with the czarist government and the surrounding Ukrainian and Russian peoples. Paradoxically, however, at the very time when the Mennonite community was beginning to identify with the Russian culture, the people of Russia were beginning to exhibit an antagonistic and bellicose attitude toward the Mennonite colonists. At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, pan-slavic nationalists began criticizing and attacking the Mennonites because of their assumed affiliations with Germany. At the same time, Ukrainian and Russian workers and peasants began condemning Mennonite landowners because of their privileged status and enormous wealth. The criticisms and fears of the nationalists and peasants eventually resulted in acts of violence being perpetrated against the Mennonite colonists. Although the Mennonites made some efforts to appease the nationalists and peasants, many of these attempts were unsuccessful. With an ever-increasing number of attacks committed against them, the Mennonites soon realized that not all was well with their

Ukrainian and Russian neighbors, and that their self-contained colonies would not always remain secure from the hostile political and social unrest that was swelling up in the cities and the countryside around them.[12]

What heightened anti-German and anti-Mennonite sentiments in many regions of Ukraine and the Crimea was Russia's entrance into World War I as an opponent of Germany. Viewing the various German-speaking minority groups as possible conspirators and "agents of the enemy," the czarist government passed a law in November of 1914 that banned the use of the German language in both the press and public assemblies. In 1915 the government issued property liquidation laws that were intended to force the German colonists to dispose of their land within eight months. Although peasant unrest in the countryside and the heavy burden of war hampered the confiscation of Mennonite lands, a large number of Mennonites were still required to surrender their sons, brothers, and husbands to serve the country in war. Hostile public opinion compelled the Mennonite colonists to beseech the Russian government to reorganize the forestry alternative service program into a noncombatant medical service program (Sanitätdienst) where the Mennonite young men could serve the Fatherland as medics and orderlies. Of the 12,000 Mennonites that signed on for state service, approximately 6,000 served in the ambulance corps, in hospitals, and on hospital trains behind the battle front. Another 6,000 men worked in the forestry service program. As in the past, the Mennonite communities bore all of the costs of the medical and forestry service programs.[13]

Despite the enormous contributions made by Mennonite men in the medical corps and the forestry programs, anti-German hostilities and attacks continued. The overthrow of the czarist government in March of 1917 and the establishment of the Provisional Government provided the Mennonites with some respite from the hate campaigns undertaken by Russian patriots and presses. The relative peace and quiet brought about by the provisional government came to an abrupt end, however, with the Bolshevik revolution in November of 1917. With the Bolsheviks in power, drastic economic, political, and social changes affected the colonies immediately. Many of the volosts in which Mennonite communities were located were now under the jurisdiction of soviets (councils of workers and peasants); as a result, Mennonite self-government in many colonies and settlements came to a halt. These soviets were often run by indigent peasants who took advantage of their new legal and political power in order to redress past wrongs and improve their economic and political circumstances. In many regions of Ukraine and the Crimea, lawless elements gained control of the soviets and sponsored a reign of terror that was expressed by acts of violence and murder perpetrated against the Mennonite colonists.[14] In such hostile surroundings, many Mennonites lost property and land and were in perpetual fear for their lives.

What brought the Mennonites some relief from this reign of terror was the advance of the Austrian and German armies into many parts of Ukraine and the Crimea in the early months 1918. Under the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March 1918), the new Soviet government was obligated to allow Austrian, German, and Don-Cossack occupation troops into Ukraine. The Austrian and German forces, which were welcomed by the Mennonite colonists, dissolved the newly established Bolshevik soviets and restored peace and order in many colonies. The presence of the German troops in the Mennonite communities, however, encouraged a spirit of militarism among some of the younger Mennonite men. This unexpected surge of militarism was eventually expressed in the organization of a Mennonite Selbstschutz (self-defense corps) in a number of settlements, particularly those in the Molotschna colony. With advice and equipment from the German troops, these Mennonite youths established armed para-military units. The establishment of such militia units naturally aroused much alarm among the Mennonite clergymen. In both sermons and newspaper articles, Mennonite elders, ministers, and deacons argued that the formation of the Selbstschutz was a violation of the historical Mennonite peace position. Their oral and written pleas for moderation and repentance, however, had little impact on the militant minority of young Mennonite men. The young men continued their military drills and took up arms whenever they felt it was warranted.[15]

With the defeat of Austria and Germany at the end of World War I and the eventual withdrawal of German troops from southern Russia, a "power vacuum" soon emerged in both Ukraine and the Crimea. At the end of World War I the Bolsheviks had still not gained control of many regions beyond Moscow and St. Petersburg, and were still embroiled in a brutal Civil War (1917-1922) instigated by insurgent White Army soldiers loyal to the Czar. Without any controlling political force in Ukraine or the Crimea, lawless brigands and anarchist armies quickly arose and began to exert their power in the regions heavily populated by the Mennonites. The anarchist who aroused the most fear in the hearts of the Mennonites was Nestor Makhno. Having worked for Mennonites as a youth, Makhno believed that he had been exploited by the colonists and decided to take revenge by initiating a reign of terror in many Mennonite settlements. With their black flags held high, thousands of Makhno's men descended on the Mennonite villages that lay in their path and began raping and murdering the inhabitants and pillaging their possessions. In a number of villages and colonies, many Mennonite men were either slaughtered with sabers or shot; a large number of these men's mothers, wives, and daughters were raped. In the Sagradovka/Kronau region alone, approximately 240 Mennonites were killed by Makhno's troops in November of 1919. It did not take long for Makhno's depredation, cruelty, and brutality to become proverbial in many of the Mennonite colonies in Ukraine and the Crimea.[16]

Throughout these long months of terror, a large number of Mennonite colonists remained loyal to their pacifistic beliefs and did not defend themselves against Makhno's men. For a minority of Mennonite men who had earlier formed Selbstschutz units, however, the wholesale pillaging, murder, and rape was too much for them to accept. Collaborating with the White Army and similar militia groups organized in nearby German-Lutheran and German-Catholic colonies, the Mennonite Selbstschutz troops actively resisted Makhno's troops in the winter of 1918-1919. These Mennonite men were successful in defending their villages until the Bolsheviks joined forces with Makhno's troops in a bid to eradicate White Army strongholds in Ukraine in the spring of 1919. When the Mennonites in the militia units learned of this united effort on the part of Makhno and the Bolsheviks, many of them put down their weapons after deciding that they would not take up arms against government troops. This act of surrender by the Mennonite militia units, however, did not pacify Makhno, who still sought to revenge the deaths of those anarchists who had fallen victim to Mennonite colonists. Makhno's troops immediately began imprisoning and executing a large number of Selbstschutz men; they also increased their attacks against those Mennonite communities that had formed or worked together with the Selbstschutz. During this period Makhno made every attempt to ensure that the Mennonites paid dearly for their attempts to defend themselves and to collaborate with the White Army.[17]

Makhno's acts of brutality and terror finally came to a halt in January of 1920 when the Bolsheviks began to drive Makhno's troops out of Ukraine and the Crimea. Yet in spite of the absence of Makhno and his troops, the repercussions of Makhno's reign of terror were still felt in the Mennonite colonies for some time to come. As carriers of syphilis, malaria, cholera, and typhus, Makhno's troops infected the Mennonite women they raped and the Mennonite families in whose homes they were quartered for long periods of time. In the Chortitza colony, for example, more than 1,500 colonists died of typhus during the winter of 1919-1920. It was only after the Mennonite colonists obtained clean bedding from other colonies that the typhus epidemic began to wane.[18]

Apart from the anguish caused by disease, the Mennonites continued to suffer from the ravages of the Civil War and then from the famine of 1921-1922. As the Bolsheviks slowly pushed their way into southern Ukraine and the Crimea, a significant number of Mennonite settlements became the battlegrounds of the Red and White armies. When the Bolsheviks finally gained control of Ukraine and the Crimea at the end of 1920, the long years of bloodshed and destruction were soon followed by many months of drought, famine, and starvation. In the spring of 1921, vast regions of Ukraine and the Crimea were hit by a devastating drought that precipitated famine conditions of unprecedented proportions which continued until the autumn of 1922. The confiscation of grain reserves by partisan groups and the Red

Army, a shortage of draft animals needed to carry out seeding operations, and a two-year drought that resulted in complete crop failures were the major factors that led to famine conditions. Hundreds of Mennonite peasants who were unable to acquire anything to eat succumbed to death.[19] These desperate circumstances eventually compelled the colonists to send representatives to North America to plead for help from the Mennonite congregations located there. In response to the plea for aid, the North American Mennonite churches organized a new Mennonite relief agency, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), which soon began sending food, clothing, medical supplies, and tractors to the famine-stricken region. A total of approximately 75,000 people, including 60,000 Mennonites, were given food and other aid by the North American Mennonite relief agency. Because of the relatively quick response of MCC, the starvation deaths of thousands of Mennonite and non-Mennonite inhabitants of Ukraine and the Crimea were prevented.[20]

Following the famine years of 1921 to 1923, the Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea faced severe economic trouble and social disarray. Although it had endured many of the major crises brought about by war, revolution, anarchy, disease, and famine, the community had lost thousands of members, as well as property and possessions worth millions of rubles. Aside from these losses, the community continued to lose large numbers of its young men to the Red Army, which had been forcibly drafting Mennonite men since 1921. For the Mennonite community to make any overt demands at this time concerning their traditional right to military exemption was almost impossible, since the community was in a very precarious and vulnerable political position vis-à-vis the new Bolshevik regime. The community's prerevolutionary wealth and privilege, its use of the German language, its resistance to assimilation, its refusal to take up arms in World War I, its formation of paramilitary militia units during the Civil War, and its collaboration with the German and White Armies had not been looked upon favorably by the new Soviet government.[21] In the eyes of many Bolshevik authorities, the Mennonites were a religious group whose loyalty to the Soviet regime was most uncertain.

Despite the ideological differences and cool relations that existed between the Soviet government and the Mennonite community, Mennonite religious and political leaders soon realized that it was in their community's best economic and political interests to take immediate steps to gain the trust of the Bolshevik leaders. They also realized that in order to obtain the release of Mennonite men from military service they would have to demonstrate their loyalty to the Soviet regime. The community's first step on the road to reconciliation with the Soviet government occurred in February of 1921, when delegates at an All-Mennonite Conference held in Alexanderwohl (Molotschna) decided that the best way for the Mennonite community to safeguard its economic and religious independence, and regain its military exemption status was to demonstrate to the government its willingness to help with the economic reconstruction of war-torn, famine-stricken Ukraine. The Mennonite delegates also decided to form an agency known as the Verband der Bürger holländischer Herkunft (Union of Citizens of Dutch Lineage), or VBHH, which would negotiate with the Bolshevik government on behalf of the 65,000 Mennonites in Ukraine (see Table J in the Appendix).[22] Under the leadership of B. B. Janz and Phillip Cornies, the VBHH obtained a wide array of economic concessions for Mennonite farmers in Ukraine from a Soviet government that was in the process of implementing its New Economic Policy (a policy which gave peasants more economic independence in their business and farming operations). While the VBHH was busy negotiating with the Soviet government, Mennonites in the Crimea and in other areas beyond the borders of Ukraine also formed an agency -- the Allrussischer Mennonitischer Landwirtschaftlicher Verein (All-Russian Mennonite Agricultural Union) or AMLV -- which had the mandate to secure concessions similar to those now enjoyed by the Ukrainian Mennonites. By obtaining such concessions, both the VBHH and the AMLV hoped to begin the process of restoring all Mennonite colonies in the U.S.S.R. to their previous levels of prosperity.[23]

In looking back at the negotiating strategy of the VBHH and the AMLV in the early 1920's, it is clear that the issue of Mennonite ownership of relatively large landholdings was one of the major focal points of their strategy. For many Mennonites, the continued ownership of their land was crucial to any thoughts of an economic future for their community in the new Communist state. In order to settle this issue, the leaders of the VBHH began discussing the landholding issue with the Central Executive Committee in Moscow and the Ukrainian government in the summer of 1921. What resulted from these meetings was a government promise that there would likely be no attempt to divide the Mennonite landholdings among landless Ukrainian and Russian peasants. In March of 1922, however, the Mennonite community's hope for continued land possession was quelled when the government decided that the Mennonites would receive no privileged landholding concessions. It was later decided that the maximum size of a land parcel would amount to thirty-two dessiatines for each Mennonite family. In April of 1922, the agricultural commissariat executive council suggested to the VBHH that the Mennonite colonies with moderate landholdings would continue to exist as long as all of the members of the colony were given an equal share of land. The council also pointed out, however, that those colonies with excessive landholdings would be required to surrender their extra land to Ukrainian and Russian peasants. The council's decisions made it possible for Ukrainian and Russian peasants to acquire land that was not only situated between Mennonite settlements, but also lying adjacent to Mennonite homes. The upshot of these decisions meant that between half and three-quarters of all Mennonite land would be transferred to landless peasants.[24]

For many Mennonites, the government's land reallotment program was a severe threat to their traditional agricultural patterns and their sense of ethnic identity. In spite of the many economic concessions granted to the Mennonite community, the loss of such a large portion of their former estates convinced many Mennonites that their economic future in the Soviet Union would be very dismal. A large number of Mennonites also saw the forced surrender of land as a fatal blow to one of the last barricades that had thus far prevented ethnic dissolution and Mennonite assimilation into the surrounding Ukrainian and Russian populations.[25] As a result of this pessimistic view of the government's land reallotment program, many Mennonites began making plans to emigrate to North America.

Another motivating force in the Mennonite emigration movement was rooted in the Mennonite community's concern with religious liberty and its wish to assert its historic position of nonresistance within the new Soviet regime. For many Mennonites the issue of the military draft was inextricably linked to their desire for religious liberty and freedom of conscience. Although initially there were some signs of hope that the government would allow the Mennonites to have an alternative service program similar to the one that existed prior to World War I, the hope for such a program was dashed when the government issued a new military law in September of 1925. The law stated that the local courts, and not a government agency, would determine which men would be exempted from military service. The law also provided an alternative service program for the exempted draftees, but it did not guarantee that those involved in the program would not directly participate in military-related activities. In the eyes of the Mennonites, the passage of such a law destroyed all of their hopes for a special government endorsement of their pacifist position. Moreover, local Soviet officials often proved prejudiced and malevolent; district judges frequently drafted young Mennonite men into the army without giving due consideration to their pleas for exemption. Many Mennonites were losing hope that the government would respect their religious beliefs. For many Mennonites, the issues of freedom of worship and conscience (as it related to nonresistance) had now superseded the landholding issue as the primary motivating factors for initiating a widespread emigration movement.[26]

The agency that was chiefly responsible for facilitating and organizing the mass migration of Mennonites from the Soviet Union was the VBHH. Working together with AMLV officials, the leaders of the VBHH prepared the necessary paperwork and obtained the passports and other documentation that the Mennonite emigration applicants required. In the six-year period between July of 1923 and April of 1928, 17,889 Mennonites were able to emigrate from the Soviet Union (see Tables E and F in the Appendix). By December of 1929, almost 23,000 Mennonites (approximately one quarter of the Mennonite population in Russia) had left the U.S.S.R. Many more Russian Mennonites were also prepared to leave the country, but government restrictions on emigration made it very difficult for applicants to acquire passports after 1926. The overwhelming majority of Mennonites who were able to emigrate moved to Canada, but a small number of colonists (475) found their way to Mexico, where they eventually settled permanently (see Tables E and F in the Appendix).[27]

For those Mennonites remaining in the U.S.S.R., their religious and economic privileges were increasingly curtailed by the Soviet government. The regime also took direct measures to close down Mennonite cultural and economic institutions, and to harass Mennonite leaders still living in the country. In the late fall of 1925, for instance, the government reorganized and weakened the VBHH as an act of retaliation for its overzealous involvement in emigration matters. Later in 1926 the agency was dissolved and many of its leaders were imprisoned or exiled. A similar fate befell the AMLV, which was dissolved in the summer of 1928. Other targets of government oppression were Mennonite clergymen and Mennonite periodicals. By 1927 a number of elders and ministers had been imprisoned or exiled, and in 1928 two Mennonite periodicals -- Unser Blatt and Der Praktische Landwirt -- were forced to cease publication. Such direct and indirect attacks on Mennonite privileges, institutions, and leaders had severely crippled the Mennonite community by the end of 1927, and extinguished much of the initiative that had previously contributed to the independent nature of the Mennonite community in Russia.[28]

In analyzing the government-sponsored oppression of the Mennonite community during the mid-1920's, it must be remembered that such oppression was not directed only against the Mennonites; by the end of 1927 many other German, Russian, and Ukrainian peasant groups also suffered from government measures designed to restrict religious, economic, and political freedoms. This suppression of the freedoms of these widely divergent groups occurred in the final days of the New Economic Policy and on the eve of the implementation of the first Five-Year Plan. At this time, the Soviet Union was about to embark on a very important transitional period in its history -- a period that would see the end of the country's flirtation with capitalism and the beginning of a new era of rapid collectivization and industrialization. For the peoples of the Soviet Union, this transitional period would radically alter their economic existence. It would also initiate political, cultural, social, religious, and demographic changes that were unparalleled not only in the history of Russia, but also in the history of the world.

Endnotes for Chapter 1

1 For some general surveys of Anabaptist and early Mennonite history, see Cornelius J. Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1981); C. Henry Smith, *The Story of the Mennonites* (Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Publication Office, 1957); James M. Stayer and Werner O. Packull, *The Anabaptists and Thomas Müntzer* (Toronto: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1980); Walter Klaassen, *Anabaptism: Neither Catholic nor Protestant* (Waterloo, Ontario: Conrad Press, 1981); Guy F. Hersberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1957). For works dealing with the Mennonite sojurn in Prussia and Poland, see John Friesen, "Mennonites in Poland: An Expanded Historical View," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 4 (1986), pp. 94-108; Erich L. Ratzlaff, *Im Weichselbogen: Mennonitischensiedlungen in Zentralpolen* (Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1971); Horst Penner, *Die ost- und westpreussischen Mennoniten in ihrem religiösen und sozialen Leben in ihren Kulturellen und wirtschaftlichen Leistungen* (Weierhof, Germany: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein E.V., 1978); Kazimierz Mezynski, *From the History of Mennonites in Poland* (Warsaw: Akademia Rolnicza W Warszawie, 1975); Cornelius H. Wedel, *Abriss der Geschichte der Mennoniten: Die Geschichte der niederländischen preussischen und russischen Mennoniten* (Newton, Kansas: Bethel-College, 1902). See also Gerhard David Huebert, "Mennonite Distinctiveness" (Unpublished Doctor of Theology dissertation, Northwestern University, 1948); Horst Penner, *Weltweite Brüderschaft: Ein mennonitisches Geschichtsbuch* (Karlsruhe: Verlag Heinrich Schneider, 1955); Peter A. Remple, *Bilder aus der Kirchen- und Mennoniten-geschichte* (Rosthern, Saskatchewan: By the Author, n.d.).

2 For two excellent investigations of Russian Mennonite history, see John B. Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites* (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1982); James Urry, "The Closed and the Open: Social and Religious Change Amongst the Mennonites in Russia (1789-1889)" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford University, 1978). Other important works that examine the history of the Russian Mennonite colonists include the following: Peter M. Friesen, *The Mennonite Brotherhood in Russia (1789-1910)*, trans. J. B. Toews, et. al., 2nd ed. (Fresno, California: Board of Christian Literature, General Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1980); Frank H. Epp, *Mennonite Exodus: The Rescue and Resettlement of the Russian Mennonites since the Communist Revolution* (Altona, Manitoba: Canadian Mennonite Relief and Immigration Council, 1962); David G. Rempel, "The Mennonite Colonies in New Russia: A Study of their Settlement and Economic Development from 1789 to 1914" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1933); J. A. Toews, *A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church* (Fresno,

California: Board of Christian Literature, 1975); A. H. Unruh, *Die Geschichte der mennoniten-Bruedergemeinde 1860-1954* (Hillsboro, Kansas: The General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America, 1955); Benjamin Heinrich Unruh, *Die niederländisch-niederdeutschen Hintergründe der mennonitischen Ostwanderungen in 16., 18., und 19. Jahrhundert* (Karlsruhe: By the Author, 1955). See also David G. Rempel, "The Mennonite Commonwealth in Russia: A Sketch of Its Founding and Endurance, 1789-1919," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 47 (October 1973), pp. 259-308, 48 (January, 1974), pp. 5-54; Frank H. Epp, "Mennonites in the Soviet Union," in *Aspects of Religion in the Soviet Union: 1917-1967*, ed., Richard H. Marshall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 285-300; Adam Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khruschchev: The Story of Russia's Germans* (Lincoln, Nebraska: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1981); Bernhard J. Harder, *Alexandertal: Die Geschichte der letzten deutschen Stammsiedlung in Russland* (Berlin: J. Kohnert, n.d.); John C. Wenger, *Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1947); Meir Buchsweiler, *Volksdeutsche in der Ukraine am Vorabend und Beginn des Zweiten Weltkriegs -- ein Fall doppelter Loyalität?*, trans. Ruth Achlama (Gerlingen, West Germany: Bleicher Verlag, 1984); Charles Henry Smith, *The Coming of the Russian Mennonites: An Episode in the Settling of the Last Frontier 1874-1884* (Berne, Indiana: Mennonite Book Concern, 1927); P. J. Schaefer, *Woher? Wohin? Mennoniten!* (Altonau, Manitoba: Verlag des Mennonitischen Historischen Vereins, 1942); *Die Mennoniten-Gemeinde in Russland während der Kriegs und Revolutionsjahre 1914 bis 1920* (Kommissions-Verlag der Mennon. Flüchtlingsfürsorge E. B. Heilbronn a. Neckar, 1921); Lennart Nyman, "Eine Mennoniten von der Wolga Erzählt," in *Sonderdruck aus Jahrbuch für Ostdeutsche Volkskunde*, ed. Erhard Riemann (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1977), pp. 99-127; Joseph A. Malinowsky, *Die Planerkolonien am Asowschen Meere* (Stuttgart: Ausland und Heimat Verlags-Aktiengesellschaft, 1928).

3 See James Urry, "The Snares of Reason: Changing Mennonite Attitudes to 'Knowledge' in Nineteenth-Century Russia," Paper given at the Australian National Univerisity (August, 1980), pp. 2ff; John B. Toews, "Russian Mennonites in Canada: Some Background Aspects," Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, pp. 118f. See also Cornelius Krahn, "Mennonite Community Life in Russia," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, (July, 1942), pp. 3ff; David Heinrich Epp, *Die Chortitzer Mennoniten: Versuch einer Darstellung des Entwickelungsganges derselben* (Odessa: Druck von A. Schultz, 1889); Gerhard Hildebrandt, "Die Mennoniten in Russland," in *Die Mennoniten*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Goertz (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1971), pp. 196f; Karl Stumpp, *Bericht über das Gebiet Chortitza in Generalbezirk Dniepropetrowsk* (Berlin: Publikationsstelle Ost, 1943), pp.

3ff; Henry B. Tiessen, *The Molotschna Colony: A Heritage Remembered* (Kitchener, Ontario: By the Author, 1979), pp. 7ff; Franz Isaac, *Die Molotschner Mennoniten: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte derselben* (Halbstadt, Taurien: H. J. Braun, 1908); Walter Sawatsky, "Mennonites in Tsarist and Soviet Russia: Problems of Church-State Relations," (Paper read at Schapiro-Redaway Seminar, London School of Economics, 9 December 1975), Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, p. 6; A. N. Ipatow, *Wer sind die Mennoniten?*, trans. H. Hunz (Alma Ata: Verlag Kasachstan, 1977); Karl Stumpp, *The Emigration from Germany to Russia in the Years 1763 to 1862* (Lincoln, Nebraska: American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, 1978).

4 In 1817 there were 5,279 Mennonites in Russia. This number increased to 13,812 in 1837, and by 1868 it had swollen to 39,742. In 1914 the Mennonite population in Russia was estimated to be over 100,000. Urry, "The Snares of Reason," pp. 4f. For works that deal with the history of Mennonite colonies outside Ukraine and the Crimea, see W. E. Surukin and Johann J. Dyck, *Am Trakt: Eine mennonitische Kolonie im mittleren Wolgagebiet* (North Kildonan, Manitoba: Echo-Verlag, 1948); C. P. Toews and H. Friesen, *Die Kubaner Ansiedlung* (Steinbach, Manitoba: Echo-Verlag 1953); Peter P. Dyck, *Orenburg am Ural: Die Geschichte einer Mennonitischen-Ansiedlung in Russland* (Clearbrook, British Columbia: Christian Book Store, 1951); N. J. Neufeld, et. al., eds., *Ufa: The Mennonite Settlements (Colonies) in Ufa, 1894-1938* (Steinbach, Manitoba: By the Editors, 1977); C. P. Toews, *The Terek Settlement: Mennonite Colony in the Caucasus -- Origin, Growth and Abandonment 1901-1918/1925*, trans. Isaac A. Dyck (Yarrow, British Columbia: Columbia Press, 1972); J. H. Brucks and H. Hooge, *Neu-Samara am Tock* (Clearbrook, British Columbia: Fraser Valley Printers, 1964); Anna Reimer Dyck, *Anna: From the Caucasus to Canada*, trans. and ed. Peter J. Klassen (Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1979); Gerhard Fast, *In den Steppen Sibiriens* (Rosthern, Saskatchewan: J. Heese, 1957); J. J. Hildebrand, *Sibirien* (Winnipeg: By the Author, 1952); Peter Rahn, *Mennoniten in der Umgebung von Omsk* (Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1975).

5 Toews, "Russian Mennonites in Canada," pp. 120f; Urry, "The Closed and the Open," pp. 257ff.

6 See John B. Toews, ed. and trans., "The Emergence of German Industry in the South Russian Colonies," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 55 (October, 1981), pp. 289-371; James Urry, "Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth and the Mennonite Experience in Imperial Russia," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 3 (1985), pp. 7ff; Harvey L. Dyck, "Russian Servitor and Mennonite Hero: Light and Shadow in Images of Johann Cornies," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 2 (1984), pp. 9ff; Martin Durksen, *Die Krim war unsere Heimat* (Winnipeg,

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7 Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, pp. 7f; Lawrence Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia: A Case Study in Church-State Relations: 1789-1936" (Unpublished Ph. D. disseration, University of Minnesota, 1984), pp. 18f; Curt E. Rohland, "Russian Colonial Administration and Mennonite Colonies in New Russia from Catherine II to 1871" (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1974).

8 Toews, *A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church*, pp. 18ff, 26ff.

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10 Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," pp. 56ff, 63ff, 70f, 85; P. Albert Koop, "Some Economic Aspects of Mennonite Migration: With Special Emphasis on the 1870's Migration from Russia to North America," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 55 (April, 1981), pp. 143-156; Gustav E. Reimer and G. R. Gaeddert, *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Jansen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874* (Newton, Kansas: Mennonite Publication Office, 1956); William J. Ewert, et. al., *Zur neuen Heimat: Die Auswanderung der Mennoniten aus Russland nach Amerika* (Hillsboro, Kansas: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1924); Gerhard Wiebe, *Causes and History of the Emigration of the Mennonites from Russia to America*, trans. Helen Janzen (Winnipeg: Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society, 1981); Katherine Nickel, *Seed from the Ukraine* (New York: Pageant Press, 1952), pp. 63ff.

11 See Urry, "The Snares of Reason," pp. 4f; Toews, "Russian Mennonites in Canada," p. 129; John B. Toews, ed., *Selected Documents* (Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1975), pp. 373ff; John B. Toews, "Cultural and Intellectual Aspects of the Mennonite Experience in Russia," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 53 (April, 1979), pp. 137-159; John B. Toews, "Childbirth, Disease and Death Among the Mennonites in Nineteenth-Century Russia," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 60 (July, 1986), pp. 450-468. See also George K. Epp, "Russian Patriotism Among the Nineteenth-Century Russian Mennonites," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 4 (1986), pp. 120ff; Harvey L. Dyck, ed. and trans., "Russian Mennonitism and the Challenge of Russian Nationalism, 1889," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 56 (October, 1982), pp. 307-341; E. K. Francis, "The Russian Mennonites: From Religious to Ethnic Group," *The American Journal of Sociology*, 54 (September, 1948), pp. 101-107.

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14 See John B. Toews, "The Halbstadt Volost, 1918-1922: A Case Study of the Mennonite Encounter with Early Bolshevism," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 48 (October, 1974), pp. 489-514; Dietrich Neufeld, *Mennonitentum in der Ukraine: Schicksalsgeschichte Sagradowkas* (Emden, West Germany: By the Author, 1922), pp. 9ff; Benjamin Heinrich Unruh, *Fügung und Führung im mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, 1920-1933 (Humanität in christlicher Sicht)* (Karlsruhe: Heinrich Schneider, 1966), pp. 9ff; Benjamin Unruh, *Revolution und Reformation in Russland* (Wernigerode am Harz: Hans Harder Verlag, 1928), pp. 35ff.

15 For some works that investigate the formation of the Mennonite *Selbstschutz*, see John B. Toews, "The Origins and Activities of the Mennonite *Selbstschutz* in the Ukraine (1918-1919)," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 46 (January, 1972), pp. 5-40; Nick J. Kroeker, *First Mennonite Villages in Russia 1789-1943: Khortitsa, Rosental* (Vancouver: By the Author, 1981), p. 211; Adolf Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland von seiner Einwanderung bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: Verlag Julius Beltz, 1932), p. 119; John B. Toews, *With Courage to Spare: The Life of B. B. Janz (1877-1964)* (Winnipeg: The Board of Christian Literature of the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches, 1978), p. 24; John B. Toews, *Lost Fatherland: The Story of the Mennonite Emigration from Soviet Russia, 1921-1927* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1967), pp. 26ff.

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Dance of Death: Revolution and Civil War in the Ukraine, trans. and ed. Al Reimer (Winnipeg: Hyperion Press, 1977); Gerhard Toews, *Schönfeld: Werde- und Opfergang einer deutschen Siedlung in der Ukraine* (Winnipeg: Rundschau Publishing House, 1939), pp. 82ff; Gerhard Lohrenz, *Fire Over Zagradovka* (Winnipeg: By the Author, 1983), pp. 27ff, 33ff, 48ff; J. C. Krause, *Gnadenfeld: Molotschna, Sued-Ruszland 1835-1943: Erinnerungen aus guter und schwerer Zeit* (Yarrow, British Columbia: By the Author, 1954), p. 9.

17 See B. B. Janz, "Selbstschutz & Machno," B. B. Janz Collection; Toews, "The Origins and Activities of the Mennonite *Selbstschutz* in the Ukraine (1918-1919)," pp. 5ff; Heinz von Homeyer, *Die brennende Halbinsel: Ein Ringen um Heimat und Ehre* (Berlin-Schöneberg: Landsmann-Verlag, 1942); Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," pp. 240ff, 244ff; Bernard J. Dick, "Something about the *Selbstschutz* of the Mennonites in South Russia (July, 1918-March, 1919)," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 4 (1986), pp. 135ff; Gerhard Lohrenz, *The Fateful Years: 1913-1923* (Winnipeg: Christian Press, 1977), pp. 110ff. Some Mennonites who refused to put down their weapons joined the ranks of the White Army. After a successful Red Army campaign in the spring and summer of 1919, the White Army was eventually forced to retreat and escape via Constantinople. Epp, "Mennonites in the Soviet Union," p. 290. For a Soviet interpretation of the Mennonite *Selbstchutz*, see A. Reinmarus (Penner), *Anti Menno: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Mennoniten in Russland* (Moskau: Zentral Völker Verlag, 1930), pp. 103ff.

18 Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, pp. 36f; J. G. Rempel, *Mein Heimatdorf Nieder Chortitza* (Rosthern, Saskatchewan: *Der Bote*, n.d.), pp. 80f. In the fall of 1917, the population of the Chortitza was eighteen thousand. This number was reduced to approximately thirteen thousand by the fall of 1920. Toews, *A History of the Mennonite Brethren Church*, p. 110.

19 Dyck, *An Introduction to Mennonite History*, p. 182; Toews, *Lost Fatherland*, pp. 38ff, 47; Toews, *Selected Documents*, pp. 71ff; G. A. Peters, *Menschenlos in schwerer Zeit: aus dem Leben der Mennoniten Süd-Russlands* (Winnipeg: Rundschau Publishing House, n.d.), pp. 44ff; Gerhard A. Peters, *Die Hungersnot in den mennonitischen Kolonien in Süd-Russland, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Molotschna-Kolonie und die Amerikanisch-Mennonitische Hilfe (A.M.H.) wie sie ein Mennonit aus Russland gesehen hat* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1923), pp. 5-34; Peter J. Dyck, *Troubles and Triumphs 1914-1924: Excerpts from the Diary of Peter J. Dyck (Ladekopp, Molotschna Colony, Ukraine)* (Springstein, Manitoba: By the Author, 1981), pp. 160ff; H. E. von Wittgenstein, *Mother's Faith -- Our Heritage* (Clearbrook, British Columbia: A. Olfert and Sons, Ltd., n.d.), pp. 43f; A. F. Wanner, *Untergehendes Volk: Geschichte der deutschen Kolonien in Russland* (Vancouver: By the Author,

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21 Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland*, pp. 153f; Toews, "Russian Mennonites in Canada," p. 132; Peter Epp, *Die Mennoniten in Russland* (Columbus, Ohio: Justina Epp, 1977), p. 131.

22 John B. Toews, "The Mennonites in the Early Soviet Period," *Mennonite Life*, 24 (July, 1969) pp. 101-108; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 47; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 96; John B. Toews, "Documents on Mennonite Life in Russia, 1930-1940: Part I -- Collectivization and the Great Terror," American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Work Paper #19 (September, 1975), p. 3.

23 Toews, "Russian Mennonites in Canada," p. 134; Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten gesagt haben," pp. 1, 18f, 21ff, 27ff, 58f. It should be noted that there were approximately 4,900 Mennonites living in the Crimea in 1926 (see Table B in the Appendix). Görz, *Die mennonitischen Siedlungen der Krim*, p. 10.

24 Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 114.

25 Toews, "Russian Mennonites in Canada," pp. 135f; Toews, "The Mennonites in the Early Soviet Period," pp. 106f.

26 Hans Rempel, *Waffen der Wehrlosen: Ersatzdienst der Mennoniten in der UdSSR* (Winnipeg: CMBC Publications, 1980), pp. 8ff, 24ff, 30ff, 34ff; John B. Toews, "The Russian Mennonites and the Military Question (1921-1927)," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 43 (April, 1969), pp. 153-168; Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in

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27 Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 225; Henry Paetkau, "Russian Mennonite Immigrants of the 1920's: A Reappraisal," Journal of Mennonite Studies, 2 (1984), pp. 72ff; B. B. Janz, "Briefe in Emigrationsfragen," B. B. Janz Collection; B. B. Janz, "Photostat Aufnahmen von alten Briefen aus Russland," B. B. Janz Collection; B. B. Janz, "Bericht ueber Zustaende in Russland, die zur Emmig. fuehrter," B. B. Janz Collection; Toews, Selected Documents, pp. 296ff; Toews, With Courage to Spare, pp. 32ff; Sanford Calvin Yoder, For Conscience Sake: A Study of Mennonite Migrations Resulting from the World War (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Herald Press, 1945); Herman A. Neufeld, Herman and Katharina: Their Story (Winnipeg: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, 1984), pp. 138ff; N. Theodorowitsch, "Die Mennoniten in der UdSSR," Sowiet Studien, 25 (1968), pp. 105f; Mary Dirks Janzen, God's Mercy and Man's Kindness: Memoirs of the Group of Mennonites Who Left the Crimea in Russia during the Early 1920's and Came to America via Batum and Constantinople (n.p., 1974).

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Chapter II

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Setting the Stage for the "Second Revolution": The Mennonite Experience in Ukraine and the Crimea between December 1927 and December 27, 1929.

The two-year period between December 1927 and December 27, 1929 was an important watershed in the history of Joseph Stalin's rule of the Soviet Union. In this period immediately following the Fifteenth Party Congress in December 1927, Stalin not only solidified his political power, but also sounded the death knell of the New Economic Policy when he inaugurated the country's first Five-Year Plan. Moreover, the "extraordinary" economic, political, and religious measures implemented by the Soviet regime during this two-year period also provided the framework for, and a foretaste of, the violent and brutal measures later utilized by Stalin to carry out his "Second Revolution" -- an era of dekulakization, collectivization, and terror-famine which extended from December 27, 1929 (at which time Stalin announced his plans to liquidate the kulak class) to the autumn of 1933.[1] Of course, all regions of the U.S.S.R. were profoundly affected by the "extraordinary measures" which Stalin employed in the period leading up to the "Second Revolution," but it was the major grain producing regions of the Soviet Union, and especially Ukraine and the Crimea, that bore the brunt of Stalin's "extraordinary measures."[2] Since many of the Mennonite communities in the Soviet Union were scattered across the steppes of Ukraine and the Crimea, they also suffered from the oppressive Soviet policies of this time. In the two-year period following the Fifteenth Party Congress in December 1927, the Soviet regime exacted from the Mennonite community such a heavy toll that by December of 1929 many Mennonites were already financially ruined, politically disenfranchised, religiously oppressed, and physically punished. In attempting to comprehend the common Mennonite experience in Ukraine and the Crimea between December 1927 and December 1929, it is necessary first to put this experience into the broader historical context of the events, policies and personalities that dramatically affected the Soviet Union during this period, and then to analyze how these events, policies and personalities specifically affected the Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea.

Immediately following the Fifteenth Party Congress -- where proposals for the first Five-Year Plan were announced and discussed, and where some of the Left (Trotskyite-Zinovite) Oppositionists were excommunicated from the party rank and file -- Stalin embarked on an adventurous plan to forcibly procure surplus grain from the peasantry so as to meet the significant grain shortage in the nation's storage bins.[3] This lack of available grain in 1927 and 1928 was the result of the government's previous heavy-handed approach in dealing with the country's peasants. Soviet authorities had already begun to put economic and political pressure on the peasants in 1926 and 1927: the market price for grain was indiscriminately reduced by twenty percent, the wealthier kulak peasants were levied higher taxes, and there was increasing political and physical persecution of the more efficient kulak farmers.[4] As a consequence of the government's measures, the peasants' incentives to grow grain and sell it to the state began to wane, and by 1928 the sale of food commodities to the state had sharply decreased. Instead of applying a more equitable solution to the problem -- that is, increasing the grain prices and decreasing the persecution directed against the wealthier peasant class -- Stalin decided in early 1928 that emergency measures were necessary to coerce the peasants into giving up their extra grain.[5] He also contended that conciliatory measures, such as raising the price of grain or supplying more manufactured goods to the countryside, were not only self-defeating, but would never appease the demands of the kulaks.[6]

Theoretically, Stalin's measures (which were later collectively referred to as the "Ural-Siberian method") were only to be used for the purpose of expropriating "kulak" grain, but in reality, the measures affected all levels of the peasantry, and they closely imitated the measures employed during the period of War Communism between 1919 and 1921.[7] In order to carry out the measures, Stalin employed thirty thousand party activists -- primarily young fanatical party members who were told to view the peasants as class enemies -- to go into the grain producing territories of the

Soviet Union in the early months of 1928.[8] These activists, empowered with the right to wield authority at the local village level, organized expropriation campaigns (particularly in January, February, and March 1928), closed down the local grain markets, determined the maximum amount of grain which peasants could mill for their own use, and prosecuted peasants suspected of hoarding grain under Article 107 of the Criminal Code.[9] The Soviet regime also implemented other extraordinary measures, such as dramatic increases in taxes, to siphon off surplus money from the peasantry.[10] In implementing these emergency measures in 1928 and later in 1929, Stalin and his colleagues believed that this would not only induce the peasants to deliver surplus grain to the state, but also provide more money for the state coffers.[11]

Stalin's attempts to economically subjugate the peasantry in 1928 and 1929 were coordinated with his plans to eventually collectivize over twenty million private peasant farms, and to ultimately establish some 240,000 kolkhozes (collective farms) and state farms.[12] On the local village level, this collectivization process was to be carried out by 25,000 industrial workers -- instruments of the Soviet regime who were often referred to as the "thousanders."[13] Frequently uninformed about agriculture and local village conditions, these "thousanders" were given authority to forcibly compel peasants to join communes and hand over their personal property, livestock, farm machinery, and even homes in 1929.[14] Moreover, Stalin also decided that "Ukraine must, in the course of a very short period of time, set an example for the organization of large-scale socialized farming."[15] From Stalin's proposals to correct the nation's long-term agricultural problems through collectivization, it was obvious that he and his cohorts hoped that they could quickly make up lost economic ground (due to the failures and mistakes of the previous years), and impress the West with successful results in their socialist transformation of Soviet agriculture.[16]

Stalin's push to rapidly collectivize the Soviet countryside was synchronized with the implementation of his first Five-Year Plan. Although some of the goals of the plan had already been announced at the Fifteenth Party Congress in December 1927 and the plan had officially begun on October 1, 1928, it was only in April and May of 1929 that some specific programs were approved by Stalin and his supporters.[17] Yet even these programs did not really constitute a "plan" at all, but merely provided a "body of figures which were constantly being scaled upward...."[18] This was because the architects of these figures put forward two versions of the plan based upon two very different economic scenarios. The first version relied upon a relatively realistic account of the prevailing economic conditions, crop production, and industrial output. The second version, on the other hand, was based upon a utopian scenario of almost perfect economic conditions. The success of this second plan was dependent upon five good harvests, a strong international market for grain, no costly military expenditures, as well as other favorable factors.[19] Apparently, this "utopian" version of the plan was still not "utopian" enough, as the figures and projections within it were scaled up even higher. Unfortunately for the Soviet peasants, it was this second optimistic version of the plan which was accepted and generally implemented, and it became Stalin's handbook for determining economic policy for the next three and one-half years.[20]

The eventual implementation of Stalin's optimistic first Five-Year Plan, the emergency measures used to procure surplus grain, and the arm-twisting tactics employed to coerce peasants to join collectives left many peasants with no alternative but to resist all government measures. The peasantry no longer trusted all that Stalin said and did, since the measures he employed throughout 1928 and 1929 signaled both an undeclared war against the peasantry and the end of the New Economic Policy in the countryside.[21] As a result of this distrust, some of the wealthier peasants sowed less grain in the springs of 1928 and 1929, "liquidated themselves" by selling their livestock and machinery, and stashed away their valuables and money.[22] Other peasants undertook more violent acts of resistance against the authorities. To quelch this upsurge of peasant resistance, local party activists were permitted to arrest, exile, and when warranted, execute those peasants whom they regarded as enemies of the state.[23] Moreover, these activists endeavored to divide the peasantry and turn the peasants against each other. To accomplish this, the activists sought to convince the poorer peasants in the village that their wealthier fellow villagers, the kulaks, were the exploiters and parasites of the nation, and thus responsible for all of the country's economic and political woes.[24] The activists also incited these poorer peasants to commit acts of violence against the wealthier peasants and plunder their property and homes.[25]

Having branded the kulaks as the archenemies of the Soviet state, Stalin now declared an all-out war against them on December 27, 1929. The objective of this war was the "liquidation of the kulaks as a class."[26] In his declaration, Stalin also stated that "dekulakization is now an essential element in forming and developing the collective farms...[and thus] of course it is wrong to admit the kulak into the collective farm. It is wrong because he is the accursed enemy of the collective farm movement."[27] Stalin buttressed his statements with complaints from Pravda which stated that not enough kulaks were being arrested, and with a report on kulaks by a Politburo Commission.[28] The report recommended "that the time is ripe for the question of the elimination of the kulak...."[29] With these calls for decisive action against the kulak, Stalin now began a new era of mass terror and oppression, a "Second Revolution" which adopted the following words of Stalin as its motto: "We have gone over from a policy of limiting the exploiting tendencies of the kulaks to a policy of liquidating the kulaks as a class."[30]

The measures that Stalin took to initiate the collectivization and dekulakization process during the transitional period from December 1927 to December 27, 1929 had a profound effect on peasants from every corner and crevice of the Soviet Union, including Mennonite peasants in Ukraine and the Crimea. As in almost every region of the Soviet Union, the reverberations of Stalin's announcement in December of 1927 that he intended to use emergency measures for procuring grain were immediately felt by the Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea.[31] In the first three months of 1928, three major grain expropriation campaigns were undertaken, and the party activists soon made their rounds within the Mennonite villages.[32] Since the Mennonites had traditionally been viewed as belonging to the wealthy "kulak" class, their grain reserves were an obvious target to be exploited. Thus many Mennonites were forced to sell their grain to the expropriators at prices determined by the government (often between seventy kopecks and one ruble ten kopecks per pood) which were far below the market price (often between two and seven rubles per pood).[33] Those Mennonites who refused to comply with the expropriators' demands often had their grain confiscated. After the first campaigns, Mennonite farmers were able to make do with less grain, but as the campaigns continued through the spring, some Mennonite farmers resigned themselves to the fact that they would have to hand over not only the grain they had intended for sale, but also their seed for next year, as well as the fodder for their livestock.[34] Many Mennonites complained that when the expropriators came for a visit, they often walked away with the last of the farmers' grain and flour.[35] Those Mennonite farmers who survived the campaigns with a surplus of grain could only mill a restricted amount of grain each month and could only sell their excess supplies to the government at a predetermined price (seventy-two kopecks per pood in some Mennonite colonies in Molotschna).[36] A number of Mennonite farmers were imprisoned after they failed to fill the grain quotas assigned to them.[37]

Stalin's plan for making up the presumed deficit of grain in the early months of 1928 continued to be implemented throughout 1929, but at a heightened intensity which was in keeping with his policy to collectivize the peasantry. As in 1928, the grain campaigns of 1929 were widespread throughout Ukraine and the Crimea, and they depleted much of the surplus grain from the 1928 harvest, as well as the grain needed for daily consumption.[38] Once again, the Mennonite kulak farmers had to bear a heavy burden of grain quotas. In the Crimea, for example, one observer pointed out that the Mennonites "who were wealthier than others now had to deliver to the government much more grain than they had harvested, and at ridiculous prices."[39] Indeed, in some regions in Ukraine the grain quota system became the primary means of liquidating the kulak class.[40] In Fürstenwerder (Molotschna), for instance, all kulaks and preachers were charged with unrealictic grain demands. One Fürstenwerder preacher, who had approximately sixteen dessiatines of land and harvested approximately one hundred poods of vegetables, was required by the government to provide six hundred poods of either barley or oats, plus one hundred poods of wheat.[41] In Chortitza, two Mennonite farmers were each required to deliver three hundred poods of wheat and seven hundred poods of grain for fodder; and in the village of Grünfeld (Kriwoj Rog) one Mennonite was ordered to supply one thousand poods of grain.[42] Undoubtedly, outrageous quotas such as these left very few Mennonite kulaks with surplus grain, but those farmers who did have a surplus usually earmarked it as seed for the next crop rather than for their own consumption.[43] Yet even the decision as to how the seed was to be used was often out of the hands of many Mennonite farmers and was instead determined by the village authorities; that is, local party activists in some Mennonite settlements dictated what crops were to be sown with the seed, and in what quantities.[44]

Those Mennonite farmers who were unable to supply the grain demanded by the village council often met a disastrous economic fate. Many were fined with stiff penalties and required by local authorities to buy grain from private speculators at exorbitant prices and then ordered to sell it to the local government elevators at rock-bottom prices.[45]

In some Mennonite villages in the Chortitza volost and in the Crimea, farmers who did not deliver the required quota of grain to the local authorities within three to five days were required to pay a punishment fee five times the amount of the original quota of grain.[46] Those farmers who were unable to pay this five-fold penalty had the option of either buying grain from private speculators (at a price between four to eight rubles per pood) and selling it to the local authorities at a set price (usually between seventy to ninety kopecks per pood), or having their farms and property auctioned off by the government, often at prices one-half to one-third the real value of the property.[47] In the village of Fürstenwerder (Molotschna), for instance, one Mennonite who found it impossible to fill an exorbitant grain quota was forced to buy the necessary grain for his quota from the private dealers at a price of 4.5 rubles per pood. The authorities also required that he procure the grain within twenty-four hours and sell it to the government for seventy-eight kopecks per pood; otherwise, he would have all of his possessions confiscated.[48] Such ultimatums relegated many Mennonite farmers to a life of poverty or imprisonment. Indeed, throughout the grain expropriation campaigns of 1928 and 1929, numerous Mennonite farmers viewed themselves collectively as the "good milk cow" of the Soviet regime.[49]

Undoubtedly, the grain expropriation campaigns of 1928 and 1929 severely threatened the economic well-being of Mennonite farmers in Ukraine and the Crimea, and this threat was compounded by the particular climatic and agricultural problems which occurred in these years. Already in the early spring of 1928, before the seed was in the ground, many Mennonite farmers did not see signs of promise for the crop production for that year. One reason for this lack of optimism was that in early spring many regions in Ukraine experienced extensive frost damage to the germinating winter wheat that had been sown in the fall of 1927.[50] Mennonite farmers from Sergejewka (Fürstenland), Wolodjenka (Cherson), Baratow (Pjatichatki), Nikolaipol, Neu-Halbstadt (Kronau), Halbstadt (Molotschna), Schönsee (Molotschna), Muntau (Molotschna), Waldheim (Molotschna), Orlow (Melitopol), and Steingut (Nikolojewsk) complained that the extensive and widespread frost had severely damaged, if not completely destroyed their crops.[51] In the Chortitza region, the winter kill was so extensive that it was estimated that seventy-five percent of the winter wheat was destroyed; and in Osterwick (Chortitza), one farmer reported that from the four dessiatines of sown winter wheat there was a yield of only twenty poods of grain.[52] A second reason for the gloomy outlook was the grain expropriation campaign of the previous winter and spring, which had skimmed off a major portion of the seed needed for the spring wheat. Thus many Mennonite farmers were left with an insufficient quantity and poorer quality of seed.[53] This problem of acquiring sufficient seed was intensified for Mennonites in districts where the local authorities only supplied seed to those farmers who were members of some type of cooperative, commune, or artel -- a proposition which the majority of Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea refused to consider at this time.[54] As a result, these Mennonites had no alternative but to leave their fields fallow for the summer.[55] For those Mennonites who still had surplus seed for their crops, peculiar weather conditions played havoc with their remaining hopes for a summer harvest. In late spring and summer, after the majority of farmers had seeded their crop, devastating storms in the Fürstenland, Chortitza, Molotschna, and Crimean regions blew out much of the seed that had just been planted. Some farmers could afford to reseed their crops, but many could not.[56] For some of those who were unaffected by the storm or were able to seed for a second time, the lack of summer rains dried up many of the hopes for any crop at all.[57] In some areas, the summer heat was so extreme that many fields were "burned up"; as a result, crop yields in these areas were very poor. One Mennonite farmer from Alexanderkrone (Molotschna) reported that from six dessiatines of seeded wheat there was only a yield of ten poods.[58] In Olgafeld (Fürstenland), one family received only five poods of grain from the harvest.[59] Similarly, in Kurman-Kemeltschie (Crimea), farmers complained that it had not properly rained for two years; many fields were dry, sterile, and not even useful for cattle grazing.[60] Consequently, a number of Mennonite settlements experienced very low yields of summer wheat in 1928.

The agricultural and climatic troubles suffered by the Mennonites in 1928 continued into 1929, but to different degrees and extents. As in 1928, there was also severe winter frost in the early spring of 1929, and this damaged and destroyed fields of winter wheat in a number of regions in Ukraine and the Crimea. In the Crimea, as well as in areas surrounding Lichtfeld (Molotschna), Fürstenwerder (Molotschna), Gnadenfeld (Molotschna), Sergejewka (Fürstenland), Olgafeld (Fürstenland), and Michelsburg (Fürstenland), much of the seed for the winter wheat was frozen out.[61] Added to the recurring troubles associated with the winter frost, many Mennonite farmers were also beset with flooding problems just after they seeded their summer crops. The Chortitza *raion* was hit especially hard. The combination of a significant increase in spring snow and rains, as well as the overflowing of the banks of the Dnieper river, not only inundated many fields and homes with water, but also took the lives of some Mennonites.[62] In the Molotschna region, Mennonite farmers also complained that the spring rains had left water standing in the fields, and as a result, the seed was late in sprouting.[63] Ironically, some of these regions later suffered from a paucity of summer rain. Due to the summer heat, some crops in the Molotschna, Chortitza, and Fürstenland regions completely dried up.[64] In the region surrounding Olgafeld (Fürstenland) there were also famine-like conditions. One Mennonite farmer predicted that he would harvest only five poods of spring wheat from his crop.[65] Still other areas were plagued with numerous hail storms which occurred with unusual frequency during the summer of 1929.[66] Yet despite these setbacks, some Mennonite farmers did have very good harvests. In areas surrounding the villages of Jasykowo and Nikolaipol, and in parts of the Molotschna colony the harvest was not only good, but in some cases, extraordinary.[67] In Chortitza, for example, one farmer reported that the oats and the barley both yielded about seventy to eighty poods per dessiatine, while the spring wheat yielded approximately fifty to sixty poods per dessiatine.[68] Other regions recorded similar yields. Yet even with such bountiful harvests, the tragic reality for the majority of these Mennonite farmers was that much of the 1929 harvest had little personal economic value, since most of it would eventually be confiscated or forcibly sold to the government at unreasonable prices.[69] Under such disheartening circumstances, many Mennonites realized that the limited economic prosperity experienced during the New Economic Period would no longer continue, and that the pathway to agricultural and economic success had come to an abrupt end.

Along with the grain expropriation campaigns, uncooperative weather conditions, and low-yielding harvests in some regions, another factor that threatened the relative economic stability of many Mennonite communities in Ukraine and the Crimea was the volatility of commodity and livestock prices in 1928 and 1929. In 1928, the extensive depletion of the grain reserves across Ukraine and the Crimea drove up the price of cereals and other food items to new levels. Of course, the prices of these types of commodities fluctuated with the seasons (the price of grain was lower after the harvest than it was in the late winter and early spring), but generally the prices in 1928 rose two, three, and even four times higher than their corresponding 1927 values.[70] One of the convenient standards for measuring the inflation rate of food was the price of one pood of wheat flour. Whereas in 1926 and 1927 wheat flour could be bought for 2 to 2.3 rubles per pood, in 1928 the price ranged between 4 and 8 rubles a pood in various regions in Ukraine and the Crimea.[71] In Neplujew (Kronau), for instance, a pood of flour sold for 4 rubles at the market; yet in regions surrounding Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk), some people were paying 7 and 8 rubles per pood.[72] In the village of Wolodjenka (Cherson), one Mennonite noted that wheat flour was 6 rubles per pood; but he also stipulated that since wheat flour and similar commodities were so seldom available, people could not purchase these commodities even if they had the money.[73] This inflationary trend in the prices of grain and other food items continued in 1929. Although some villages did not experience significant increases in the price of wheat flour, other villages did, particularly in the early months of 1929. For example, in the village of Waldheim (Molotschna), wheat flour sold for 4.5 rubles per pood in January 1929; and in the village of Rosenbach a pood of wheat flour was 7 rubles by late spring.[74] At the same time, however, the price of wheat flour had risen to ten rubles per pood and more in the villages of Chortitza and Olgafeld (Fürstenland), and between fifteen rubles and twenty rubles in the village of Osterwick (Chortitza) and the villages within the Melitopol region.[75] While the price of wheat flour fell during summer and early autumn, by late autumn it hovered in the range between nine and twelve rubles per pood.[76] With the price of wheat flour and similar commodities at such prohibitive prices, Mennonites either had to make do with less, or look for alternative food sources, such as potatoes and garden vegetables, as the basic staples of their diet.[77]

As with the price of commodities, the price of livestock was also directly affected by the expropriation campaigns and crop yields of 1928 and 1929, but in a very different manner. Unlike the price of cereals and other food commodities which generally rose in 1928, the price of livestock plummeted to record lows.[78] Whereas in 1927 a horse or a cow usually cost between one hundred and two hundred rubles, in 1928 the price of livestock dropped by fifty percent and more in many regions in Ukraine and the Crimea.[79] In Wolodjenka (Cherson), for instance, one Mennonite noted that livestock prices had fallen so low by the summer of 1928 that horses sold for forty-five to eighty rubles a head, cattle for thirty to eighty-five rubles a head, and calves for two to three rubles a head.[80] This bottoming out of livestock prices resulted because many farmers were forced to sell their livestock in market conditions where there did not exist a corresponding demand for such livestock.[81] After the grain expropriation campaigns and levying of higher taxes in the spring of 1928, many farmers often sold their livestock at bargain prices in order to buy extra grain for their exorbitant grain quotas, or to pay for their rising taxes. There were also some farmers who could not afford to feed their livestock with such prohibitively priced grain and therefore sold their animals to avoid further losses.[82] These motives for selling livestock, along with the government's practice of selling confiscated livestock and property at public auctions at give-away prices, all contributed to the deflated livestock values.

In the early months of 1929, however, the market price for livestock in many regions suddenly rebounded. This was due to a decrease in the number of animals necessary to satisfy market demands, and the government's steps to increase the collectivization not only of property and land, but also of livestock.[83] In some regions, prices rose only marginally. For instance, one Mennonite from Reinfeld (Kronau) noted that in mid-January horses were selling for eighty-five rubles apiece.[84] In other regions, however, prices skyrocketed. In the vicinity of Osterwick (Chortitza), milk cows were fetching 130 rubles each, while sheep were selling for 10 rubles a head in the early months of 1929.[85] A Mennonite from Sergejewka (Fürstenland) stated that in the spring of 1929 a good cow could be sold for 180 rubles.[86] In the Crimea region, another Mennonite was astounded by how much the price of livestock suddenly rose after the Christmas of 1928.[87] He pointed out that in November and December of 1928, a cow could be purchased for 70 to 90 rubles, but after Christmas the price had jumped to between 200 and 250 rubles.[88] It is true that some Mennonite farmers who sold their livestock at this time were able to profit from this sudden inflation of market prices, but much of this profit was eventually handed over to the government in grain quotas and taxes.

By the fall of 1929, the livestock prices in some Mennonite villages bottomed out again. This was due to thousands of Mennonites leaving their villages and moving to Moscow in a last ditch attempt to emigrate from the Soviet Union (see below pp. 87 ff). Those Mennonites who decided to go to Moscow with the hope of purchasing an emigration pass quickly tried to sell whatever they had in order to finance their trip. In some villages more than fifty percent of the population decided to leave, and the local market demand for livestock consequently declined. One Mennonite from Ukraine noted that in his village a three-year-old horse once worth more than one hundred rubles now sold for thirty to forty rubles, a cow for less than thirty rubles, a two-year-old horse for three rubles, and a sheep for fifty kopecks.[89] In Alexandrowka (Kronau), another Mennonite stated that a good horse could be bought for between fifteen and twenty rubles, and that a wagon and a horse sold for fifty rubles.[90] The

Mennonite flight to Moscow certainly did not help stabilize the livestock market prices in many Mennonite communities in the latter months of 1929, and on the whole, the volatility of the livestock prices of 1928 and 1929 only compounded the economic tribulations of the Mennonite farmers during these years.

Besides dramatically affecting the commodity and livestock prices, the grain expropriation campaigns and low crop yields of 1928 and 1929 also initiated a period of privation and hunger within Mennonite communities. Already in the spring of 1928, grain shortages resulted in long queues of people waiting to purchase their daily quota of flour and bread at the local flour mill or bakery. In the village of Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk), for instance, one Mennonite reported that he once counted over 975 people standing in line at the bakery. These people had been waiting in line for over fourteen hours to buy their quota of five pounds of bread.[91] Such scenes were also commonplace in Chortitza. A Mennonite from this colony noted that there was never enough bread available, and that there were between two hundred and three hundred people who stood in line at the bakery just to be able to purchase their daily quota of one pound of bread per person.[92] Moreover, in the village of Sergejewka (Fürstenland), one Mennonite complained that there was such a shortage of wheat by the end of April 1928 that he had to stand in line for two days at a store in order to receive one pood of flour.[93] The long queues for bread and flour gradually became more and more common, and the ravages of poverty and hunger began to take their toll in some Mennonite communities in 1928. In villages and cities such as Gnadenfeld (Molotschna), Alexandrowsk, Steingut (Nikolajewsk), and Sofiewka (Cherson), some Mennonites were in such dire financial straits by the spring and summer of 1928 that they could no longer buy food, and were left to die on the streets.[94] In view of this growing rate of destitution and privation, there arose a pervasive fear among those Mennonites who still had enough to eat that their own food and grain reserves would not hold out until the next harvest, and that they might also meet the same fate as their starving relatives and neighbors.

By 1929, the bare pantries in many Mennonite homes were tangible signs that the worst of their fears had come true. In the early months of that year, severe shortages of bread were reported by Mennonites in villages such as Sergejewka (Fürstenland), Michelsburg (Fürstenland), Fürstenwerder (Molotschna), and Einlage (Chortitza), and in some villages in the Crimea.[95] In Osterwick (Chortitza), for instance, one Mennonite noted that bread was almost impossible to get, and as a result, thirteen Mennonite families from that village were starving.[96] By the summer and fall of the same year, similar reports of bread shortages and famine-like conditions came from Mennonites in Konteniusfeld (Molotschna), Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk), Pawlowka (Chortitza), Chortitza, Lidenau (Molotschna), Waldheim (Molotschna), and Sergejewka

(Fürstenland).[97] Such impoverished conditions forced some Mennonites, especially widows and children, to resort to begging. In the village of Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk), for example, one Mennonite noted that since the daily quota of bread was so low (twelve ounces per day), many Mennonite women -- particularly widows -- were starving, and thus had to beg for food.[98] In Sergejewka (Fürstenland), another Mennonite noticed that there were many children standing along the roadsides and begging.[99] Along with the shortage of food there was also a shortage of clothing, as well as a lack of fuel for heating homes and cooking meals. In villages such as Osterwick (Chortitza), the shortage of clothing was so severe that some Mennonite children had to endure the entire winter of 1928-1929 without shoes.[100] For many Mennonites, these grim conditions provided tangible evidence that the New Economic Policy had come to a close, and gave them a bitter foretaste of things to come.

The combined economic effects of the unstable commodity and livestock prices, the grain expropriation campaigns, and the difficulties associated with the crop years of 1928 and 1929 left many Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea anxious about their food reserves and on the brink of ruin. What finally forced many Mennonites into bankruptcy was the government's restructuring and increase of existing taxes.[101] One method used by the regime to multiply the taxation revenue was to reassess property values and substantially increase the rate of taxation for monetary income and property -- a measure directed particularly at the kulak class.[102] In Mennonite settlements across Ukraine and the Crimea, government officials and local activists often arbitrarily reassessed income as well as land and property taxes. As H. J. Willms, a Mennonite from the Molotschna region, observed:

> ...the peasants' income was determined quite independently of the actual facts. For example, according to the official assessment, the earnings of the peasant were set at 3000 rubles, although the actual income amounted to only 800 rubles. Or, if a peasant earned a crop yield valued at 170 rubles, he was only responsible for paying the regular income tax, but was forced to pay an additional tax of 250 rubles if he owned an engine.[103]

Such arbitrary tax reassessments were felt especially in the Chortitza _volost_. In their recalculations of the value of property, land inspectors in the Chortitza _volost_ often doubled the land tax of property and subsequently categorized almost all of the farmers in this region as "wealthy."[104] In analyzing the hard economic facts of such categorizations, one Mennonite from Chortitza noted that a farmer who in previous years had earned approximately 1500 rubles from his crop and paid 195 rubles in taxes now -- in 1928 -- had to pay 600 rubles in taxes from a crop valued at approximately 2000 rubles.[105] Mennonite farmers in other regions such as Nikolajewsk, Molotschna, Kronau, and Fürstenland also suffered the consequences of similar reassessments, and were also required to bear this burdensome yoke of government taxation.[106]

Mennonite farmers, however, were not the only victims of the government's burgeoning income and property taxes. Mennonite preachers, lay preachers, and elders were also singled out as valuable sources of revenue to be tapped, and their income and property taxes were therefore increased significantly in 1928.[107] One of the reasons for their high tax assessment was the Soviet argument that the clergymen's economic subsistence was capitalist in nature; that is, the income of a clergyman was attained by exploiting and benefiting financially from the economic vulnerabilities of the poor. As a result of this line of thinking, the central government issued a decree in 1928 which stated that the income tax of clergymen was to be assessed on all sources of income "on the basis of information available to the fiscal authorities."[108] Such a decree left the Mennonite clergymen vulnerable to the whims of the local tax authorities; consequently, some Mennonite ministers saw a fifty to one-hundred percent increase in their taxes. The Mennonite minister A. P. Toews from Chortitza, for instance, saw his tax bill jump from a relatively small amount in 1926 and 1927, to 250 rubles in 1928.[109] Although many local congregations rallied around their ministers and assisted them by helping to pay for their taxes, some pastors received very little financial assistance -- usually because the church members themselves were financially strapped -- and were left with the alternatives of either selling their property or witnessing the government confiscate their property and land.[110]

Besides being burdened with an increase in land and property taxes, the Mennonites were also subject to two other types of taxation in 1928 which took a heavy toll on the financial status of their communities: the "self-tax" and the compulsory purchase of government bonds and loans (commonly referred to as "obligations").[111] For the government, both of these avenues of taxation revenue were effective in digging deep into the individual and communal pockets of the Mennonites. The "self-tax" -- a taxation scheme which was a vestige of pre-revolutionary Russia, and which used to supplement the cost of local agricultural, social, and educational programs -- was levied along class lines and was usually assessed at between ten and thirty-five percent of personal income and land taxes.[112] Everyone was required to pay the tax, and in some villages even the poor had to pay a two and a half ruble minimum tax.[113] The obligations, on the other hand, were tailored to be a community tax which the residents of a particular village soviet were compelled to pay. Although the government promised the villagers that monetary interest would be added to the principal of the bonds and loans, and that the money from the bonds and loans would be used to promote agricultural and economic development in the region, the money collected seldom benefited the individual farmers directly. Instead, it was usually diverted to help finance out-of-province communes and cooperatives, as well as military and other major government projects.[114] The state loans and bonds, which the villagers were to purchase "voluntarily," proved to be very burdensome for many Mennonite communities. The village of Neu-Halbstadt (Kronau), for example, had to pay six-thousand rubles in state loans.[115] Another Mennonite village near Ohrloff (Molotschna) was required to supply 8,500 rubles for a government loan.[116] Of course, it was the local village inhabitants who had to supply the money, and in some cases, these villagers had to pay more in obligations than in income and property taxes. In the Molotschna colony, for instance, one Mennonite stated that "he still had to pay 105 rubles in taxes over and above another 200 rubles in obligations."[117] While it is true that Mennonite farmers did have recourse to appeal to the village soviet to reduce their taxation burden, very few saw their appeals upheld.[118] More often than not, their appeals were ignored, and they often had no choice but to sell their livestock, machinery, and property in order to pay their taxes and avoid being arrested.[119] Some of those who were unable to meet their tax assessments were imprisoned; others were sentenced to one-year terms of forced labor, deprived of their property, and separated from their families who were forcibly evacuated to other provinces.[120]

In 1929, the Soviet method of levying various taxes along class lines not only continued, but intensified, with the kulak class bearing the brunt of the tax burden. The official approval of the Five-Year Plan in April-May of 1929, the new push to collectivize the peasantry, and the increased measures to define and economically isolate the kulaks and preachers were all reflected in the taxation schemes of that year. The taxation measures employed by the Soviet regime in 1929 were so harsh that the familiar catch phrase "the kulak was to be exterminated not by the club but by the ruble" soon came to accurately reflect the economic fate of the wealthier Mennonite peasant class as well as the Mennonite clergy.[121] Increases in obligations and income and property taxes, as well as a dramatic rise in the "self-tax" (which rose to fifty percent of income and property taxes in a number of regions in Ukraine and the Crimea) put an economic stranglehold on and "taxed to death" many private farm enterprises.[122] In order to meet their debts, some farmers went to work in neighboring villages and cities, while others sold their property and land at unusually depressed prices.[123] Still others had their possessions and property confiscated by local authorities.[124] Similar treatment was meted out to Mennonite clergymen, who also felt the taxation squeeze. In 1929, for instance, the taxes of the minister A. P. Toews from Chortitza were again reassessed and he was handed a tax statement amounting to 350 rubles.[125] Along with the ministers, those who had worked on behalf of Mennonite organizations such as the Kommission für Kirchenangelegenheiten (Commission for Church Affairs) or KfK were also targeted for exorbitant taxes. One member of the KfK, whose property should only have been taxed between 32 and 37 rubles, was required to pay 366 rubles because he was a minister and worked for the commission.[126] As in 1928, many local congregations again came to the rescue of their ministers and helped them to pay their taxes; but there were also some ministers who were forced to sell all of their property or who had to stand by helplessly as government officials confiscated their possessions.[127] Such scenes were not isolated or rare; they became increasingly common in Mennonite settlements across the steppes of Ukraine and the Crimea.

The escalating rates of taxation in 1929 certainly crippled many Mennonite ministers and wealthier Mennonite farmers economically, but these two groups were not the only people in the Mennonite community who worried about their economic fate. Mennonites who belonged to the class of "middle farmers" also realized that the present Soviet definition of kulak was not written in stone, and that their status as middle farmers could be changed to that of kulaks at the whim of a local activist.[128] Thus to avoid being labeled a kulak, and to dodge the taxes which accompanied such a label, some Mennonite middle farmers sold their livestock and machinery at bargain prices, while others gave away their farming implements (tractors, threshing machines, and motors) to the local collectives and "Committees of the Poor."[129] Drastic action such as this was one of the tell-tale signs indicating that the Mennonite hopes for economic stability and prosperity nurtured during the New Economic Policy were now dashed.

Two other signs which indicated that the stability and prosperity of the New Economic Policy no longer existed were the introduction of a new law (January 10, 1928) which modified the rules concerning the skhod (village commune meeting), and the increasing number of Mennonites who became disenfranchised and were thus ineligible to participate in village politics. For the Mennonites, these were clear signs of the Soviet regime's intent to purge the village soviet and commune of kulaks, and to give more political power to the village soviet. What made the new law of January 10 so politically threatening to the Mennonite communities was its stipulation that only one-third of the eligible voters in a village were needed to provide a legal quorum for determining economic and political policies if an earlier meeting for these purposes failed to attain a quorum of at least one-half of the inhabitants.[130] The law also stated that local residents who had been disenfranchised were not permitted to vote at village meetings; moreover, the law gave the village soviet the right to overrule village-meeting decisions which were deemed to be contrary to official Soviet policy.[131] This reduction in the required number of enfranchised people needed to fill a quorum, combined with the increased power of the village soviet, meant that in Mennonite communities it was not necessary for the majority of enfranchised Mennonites -- who were generally of one political mind -- to determine local political and economic policies. Instead, these policies could likely be determined by the minority of enfranchised non-Mennonite villagers who closely followed the Soviet party line or by a cadre of party activists in the village soviet.[132] Within the Mennonite communities, the new law threatened to supplant the limited political control that Mennonite peasants and preachers had partially regained during the New Economic Policy with a hegemony of power in the hands of party activists and officials.[133]

What the Mennonite community found more distressing than the loss of political influence in village affairs were the consequences that arose for the significant number of Mennonites who lost their electoral rights in 1928 and 1929. Disenfranchisement, which usually occurred in conjunction with other penalties such as confiscation of property, imprisonment, and exile, was not merely a deprivation of the right to vote in the *skhod*; it was often a deprivation of the right to make a living. When a Mennonite peasant lost his vote, this fact appeared on his personal documents. If he was required to leave his home to find employment, his disenfranchised status often prevented him from obtaining employment, lodging, food rations, and medical services.[134] As one Mennonite from the Molotschna colony correctly observed: "a person who has lost the right to vote actually has no rights at all... and if at village meetings that person dares to speak up, he risks... [losing] his accommodations and food rations.[135] Moreover, in many regions in Ukraine and the Crimea, those who were disenfranchised were usually required to pay higher taxes, were restricted from joining a kolkhoz, and in some instances, were not allowed to send their children to school.[136] In 1928, it was generally the Mennonite ministers and the wealthier Mennonite farmers, artisans, and merchants who suffered the consequences of a loss of electoral rights.[137] By 1929, however, disenfranchisement no longer occurred within the boundaries of the kulak and clergy classes, but affected Mennonites of all social rank, and touched all Mennonite communities in varying degrees.[138]

The increasing incidence of disenfranchisement in Mennonite communities, along with the restriction of Mennonite influence in the decision-making process at the village level, coincided with an anti-religious campaign and a curtailment of religious rights in 1928 and 1929. New government regulations restricting churches and their operation, as well as the government's ardent atheistic propaganda campaigns, put a great deal of economic, political, and social pressure on the Mennonite congregations. No group of people felt the pressures and persecutions of this period more keenly than the Mennonite clergy (ministers, lay-ministers, elders, and song leaders). The Mennonite religious leadership undoubtedly experienced numerous trials and tribulations during the New Economic Policy, but after the Fifteenth Party Congress held in December of 1927, a new era of more intense religious persecution began.[139] During the first two years of the first Five-Year Plan, Mennonite clergymen became expendable pawns in the government's bid to displace the Mennonite religious leadership and sovietize the Mennonite communities as quickly as possible. To initiate this process of displacement and sovietization, the government took a number of measures in 1928 to isolate the clergy both socially and economically. Besides disenfranchising the Mennonite religious leaders and "taxing them to death," the government also increased the restrictions which prohibited Mennonite ministers from practicing itinerant evangelism and which confined them to preaching only within their own congregations. The government also confiscated and auctioned off the property of ministers who were unable to pay their debts. Those ministers who were perceived to be a political threat were either imprisoned or, on occasion, exiled.[140] Moreover, the government attempted to snuff out the influence of the KfK, one of the few remaining Mennonite organizations in 1928 that sought to safeguard the ecclesiastical concerns of Mennonite communities throughout the Soviet Union. The government endeavored to accomplish its goal by taxing exorbitantly and imprisoning those ministers who worked for the KfK.[141] In October of 1928, for example, A. J. Klassen and J. J. Wiebe -- two Crimean ministers who were also members of the KfK -- were put behind bars in Symferopil because they attempted to intercede on behalf of forty-four Mennonite men who were in the process of being drafted into the ranks of the Red Army.[142] Without doubt, this oppressive government action against both the KfK and the Mennonite clergy was tangible evidence of the government's future intentions for the Mennonite faith in Ukraine and the Crimea.

In 1929, the government's economic and political siege of the Mennonite clergy and the KfK continued, and many of the measures used to harass and financially ruin Mennonite ministers in 1928 were reinstated and intensified.[143] As a result of this action, the number of Mennonite ministers who were imprisoned and exiled rose dramatically in 1929, and a significant number of Mennonite communities experienced the loss of a minister, lay minister, elder, or song leader.[144] Many of those who were incarcerated were participants in the "trek to Moscow" -- an attempt to convince the government officials in Moscow to permit Mennonites from all across the Soviet Union to emigrate to the West in the fall of 1929 (see below pp. 87ff.).[145] Many of the Mennonite clergymen who were unsuccessful in their attempt to emigrate were imprisoned in Moscow, and within a few months were usually exiled to infamous work camps near Vologda, the Solovets Islands, Arkhangelsk, and Tomsk.[146] This was also the fate of some ministers who were forcibly sent back to their home villages, and later charged with agitating the people to emigrate.[147] Those who worked for the KfK soon found themselves imprisoned and sent to work camps, as did A. Ediger and Jacob Remple, two ministers and members of the

KfK.[148] This type of repressive government treatment not only made it extremely difficult for the Mennonite leadership and the KfK to operate effectively, but also hindered the ability of the Mennonite congregations to work together in religious and political matters.

In addition to the repressive treatment of Mennonite religious leaders in 1928 and 1929, another major threat to the religious survival of the Mennonite congregations in Ukraine was the League of the Godless. Throughout 1928 and 1929, this government-sponsored atheistic organization established itself in many Mennonite communities, and worked ardently to convert Mennonites -- especially Mennonite young people -- to the creed of atheism.[149] In the village of Chortitza, for instance, one Mennonite woman reported that already in 1928, the League of the Godless was providing lectures to Mennonite youth with the hope that they would become "enlightened" and abandon their religious faith.[150] The League of the Godless also held public debates with local clergymen with the intent not only to show the folly of adhering to a religious faith, but also to ridicule and discredit the local Mennonite ministers. Occasionally, however, this ploy backfired, and it was the Mennonite ministers who embarrassed their atheistic debating opponents with ingenious rebuttals and arguments.[151] Yet despite the counter-attacks by the Mennonite clergymen, the members of the League of the Godless were undaunted in their endeavors. In the village of Halbstadt (Molotschna), for example, atheists in the medical professional school organized an anti-religious Bible circle in 1929 in order "to contradict the Bible and find its weaknesses."[152] Due to such efforts, members of the League of the Godless enjoyed moderate success in some Mennonite communities and were able to enlist new recruits. In Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk) and in some villages in the Molotschna colony, there were some young people who left the church.[153] Such losses of membership certainly endangered the survival of the Mennonite congregations while advancing the sovietization process of the Mennonite community in general.

Another government action which imperiled Mennonite religious life was the issuance of the "Decree on Religious Associations" (April 8, 1929) and the "Instructions of the People's Commissariat of the Interior" (October 1, 1929).[154] Both of these documents -- which defined the status, rights, and obligations of recognized religious groups and organizations and which determined Soviet policy concerning religion for the next half century or more -- limited much of the public expression of Mennonite religious life to the mere ceremony of the religious service.[155] For many Mennonites, the injunctions of the decree and the instructions were not only tyrannical, but also demonic in nature -- especially those laws which prohibited the biblical instruction of children and the organization of prayer and Bible meetings.[156] What was also discouraging for the Mennonite community was that the new legislation gave local soviets, cooperatives, and factories the right to determine how the local church buildings were to be used. As a consequence of this legislation, an increasing number of Mennonite church buildings were assessed excessive taxes which their congregations were unable to pay, and were subsequently closed down and converted into community halls, theaters, or even granaries. In the village of Einlage (Chortitza), for example, the Mennonite church was torn down and the material was used to build a school in a nearby Ukrainian village.[157] In Chortitza, the workers at the Engels factory commandeered the church and turned it into a cultural hall.[158] Undoubtedly, this government-sponsored attack against church property, as well as the new laws and their repercussions, left many Mennonite communities extremely anxious about the survival of both their individual congregations and the Mennonite faith as a whole in Ukraine and the Crimea.

The ability of the Mennonite community to practice its religious faith was made even more difficult in August of 1929 when the central government introduced its legislation concerning the continuous work week -- legislation which no longer allowed Sundays or religious holidays (Christmas and Easter) to be special days of rest. By incorporating the continuous work week into all aspects of Soviet life, the government claimed that industrial and agricultural production would be made more efficient, and that "this measure will invariably... facilitate a more successful struggle against religion and other survivals of the old way of life.[159] Within the Mennonite communities, it was feared that this government measure would not only break up the churches, but also family life.[160] This was because the legislation affected not only the work week of adults, but also the school week of children. Mennonite children were now required to attend school on Sundays and holidays, and those parents who kept their children home to attend church were usually charged stiff fines.[161] Without question, the implementation of the continuous work week made the observance of Sundays and religious holidays extremely difficult for the Mennonites, and it was therefore one of the government's most effective means of destabilizing the religious foundations of the Mennonite communities.

The repressive government actions against the Mennonite leadership, the limited success of the League of the Godless, and the legislation designed to curb religious activities certainly convinced some people to leave the Mennonite religious fold; at the same time, however, these repressive measures and organizations ironically led many other uncommitted Mennonites back into the fold. The oppressive religious atmosphere of 1928 and 1929 forced Mennonites to come to terms with their religious convictions, and in countless instances this resulted in the widespread organization of secret Bible and prayer meetings, as well as an increase in the number of baptisms in numerous villages.[162] Even in the villages where significant numbers of young people had left the church there were signs of renewal. In one village in the Molotschna colony, for example, forty people were converted to the faith in the spring of 1929.[163] What was also astounding was that despite the oppressive government treatment of clergymen, there were a high number of men in some Mennonite communities who wished to be ordained into the ministry.[164] In this respect, the government's attack on the Mennonite church was like a two-edged sword: in some Mennonite communities it threatened the future survival of local congregations, while in other communities it initiated a resurgence of zealous religious commitment and activity.

Complementing the government's anti-religious measures against the Mennonite clergy and congregations were its campaigns directed against professing Mennonite teachers and their incorporation of religious teaching into the Soviet school curriculum. In 1928 and 1929, the government sought to eradicate all vestiges of religious teaching and doctrine in the schools, to remove those teachers who espoused a religious faith, and to re-build the school curriculum around the atheistic teachings of Marx and Lenin. In the Mennonite communities, the process of purging the school system of religious ideas and educators occurred in 1928.[165] In the village of Chortitza, for example, all of the Mennonite teachers in the primary and secondary schools were required to write a political examination designed to screen out those who held religious beliefs. Of the 192 teachers who wrote the examination, only 20 passed. Consequently, many of the teachers who failed the examination decided to quit their teaching positions and take up a different line of work rather than compromise their religious positions.[166] Heinrich Woelk, a teacher in a village in the Kronau region, lost his job because he refused to sing the "Internationale" with his students. His refusal was based on the fact that the anthem contained the words, "We are saved by no higher being, no God, no emperor or tribune...."[167] Of course, Woelk found it very difficult to find another teaching position; nevertheless, when he did find one the following winter he again refused to sing the anthem and was again dismissed.[168] By 1929, those Mennonite teachers who had religious convictions but had managed to evade dismissal were put under greater pressure when they were required to teach anti-religious propaganda in their schools.[169] This government measure forced many Mennonite teachers to relinquish their positions and find other work.[170]

Mennonite educators were often singled out and attacked for their religious beliefs at teachers' conferences. At a conference of German teachers from the Chortitza raion, for instance, the delegates stated that "Mennonite kulaks were persecuting the honest Soviet teachers"; they also contended that Mennonite teachers who professed a religious faith had been treated far too leniently up until now.[171] The delegates then drafted a declaration which contained a number of resolutions, including the following: the principles of the Soviet school system must be retained in all daily school work and the children must be instructed in Leninist doctrine; a fight must be waged against the influence of those teachers belonging to a church or believing community; children must be urged to participate in community organizations such as the Pioneers; and there must be a continuation and increase in the work to persuade the children as well as the rest of the population to carry out the cultural revolution. All of the delegates were then required to sign the declaration, but three Mennonite teachers -- H. Epp, A. Sudermann, and P. Frose -- refused to sign it because they found the resolutions to be incompatible with their religious beliefs.[172] To be sure, such public demonstrations of religious conviction meant loss of employment, economic ruin, and sometimes imprisonment and exile for many Mennonite teachers, but they also indicated the willingness of many Mennonites to stand up for their faith and beliefs.[173]

Aside from the government's harsh anti-religious campaigns to remove "religious teachers" and doctrine from Soviet schools, the Mennonites also felt victimized by the government's apparent disregard for their requests for freedom of religious conscience and exemption from all military service. This feeling of victimization in 1928 and 1929 was specifically due to three government measures: 1) the use of propaganda to denounce the Mennonite pacifist position; 2) the determination of local courts in Ukraine and the Crimea to deny almost all Mennonite youths exemption from some type of military or alternative service; and 3) the government's treatment of Mennonite leaders and ministers who worked on behalf of Mennonite youths in alternative service.[174] In its propaganda campaign against the Mennonites' position of nonresistance, the government took advantage of and publicized examples of Mennonites who had abandoned their co-religionists' pacifist position for the glory of serving the fatherland. In the Crimea, for example, one group of predominantly Mennonite men wrote a public declaration which denounced the Mennonite position of nonresistance, chastised the Mennonite clergy for sanctioning such a doctrine (which in their eyes benefited only the clergy and the rich), and touted the honors and responsibilities of serving the Soviet Union in a military capacity. The group attained widespread attention and notoriety when the declaration was published in Saat, a newspaper operated by the Central Committee of the Communist Youth Society in Ukraine.[175] The government also scored propaganda points when a party newspaper called Das Neue Dorf published the statement of seven Mennonite youths from Steinfeld (Kriwoj-Rog) who declared that they wished to honour their country by serving in the Red Army.[176] Public anti-pacifist declarations such as these certainly aroused public hostility against the Mennonites' earlier petitions for complete military exemption, and decreased the likelihood of future exemption of Mennonites from either military or alternate service. Although there were instances of local courts in various regions of the Soviet Union exempting Mennonite youths from military and alternate service in 1926 and 1927, this was generally not the case in Ukraine and the Crimea. By 1928, most Mennonite men of recruiting age in Ukraine and the Crimea were required to serve a strictly regimented two-year term of alternate service which was divided up into six-month periods of work that stretched out over four or five consecutive summers.[177] In 1927 and 1928, many of the Mennonites who had been born in the years between 1902 and 1906 put in their alternate service time by working on railway lines in the region of Kiev (on the Chernihiv-Ovruch rail line, and on a bridge building project over the Desna River, seventy kilometers from Kiev).[178] Others worked in forests in regions northeast of Moscow and near the Ural Mountains. In 1929, many of those who were working near Kiev were transferred to the Novosibirsk and Tomsk regions of Siberia to do forestry work.[179] The working and living conditions for these men were often deplorable, and when Mennonite ministers occasionally tried to intercede on their behalf (either in exemption hearings at the local courts or with officials in negotiating better working conditions for the men), ~~the~~ clergymen were arrested and imprisoned.[180] Under such trying circumstances, Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea had good reason to fear that their earlier petitions for complete military exemption had fallen on deaf ears and that the option of alternate service could be eliminated at any time.

To be sure, the curtailment of religious rights and the refusal to recognize the Mennonite request for military exemption proved to be valuable weapons in the Soviet government's ideological, political, and economic struggles with the Mennonite community as a whole. But another weapon in the government's arsenal which proved to be even more effective in dealing with the Mennonite peasantry was the act of physically liquidating not only the Mennonite clergymen, but also the wealthier Mennonite farmers. Although the arrest, imprisonment, and exile of kulaks did not occur at the same rates in 1928 and 1929 as during the wholesale arrest and mass deportation campaigns characteristic of the years of the "Second Revolution" (1930 to 1933), they nevertheless occurred with enough frequency to arouse great anxiety within most Mennonite communities. In 1928, there were not only suggestions in the newspapers and village commune meetings to imprison, exile, and even kill kulaks, but also plans for the limited implementation of those suggestions when Mennonite farmers were imprisoned for failing to meet their grain quotas or taxes.[181] In Chortitza, plans were even drawn up to rid the village of all kulaks, and although there did not exist a formal Soviet definition of the term kulak in 1928, local activists in Chortitza took it upon themselves to establish their own definition, and branded anyone who had more than two horses, a cow and three dessiatines of land as being a kulak.[182] In other villages, plans for exiling kulaks were carried out to a limited extent. In the village of Neuenberg (Chortitza) one Mennonite was exiled, and in the village of Kronstal (Chortitza) two Mennonites were banished to northern regions.[183] The increasing instances of imprisonment and exile, as well as the pugnacious rhetoric of local government officials lobbying for more kulaks to be expelled from Ukraine and the Crimea, provided the Mennonite community with just cause for alarm and concern for their lives.

By the spring of 1929, the rhetoric surrounding the possibility of exiling more kulaks became more intense, particularly after the Soviet government outlined a formal list of criteria for the "kulak farm" in May of 1929.[184] By this time, local activists in some Mennonite communities saw the Mennonite kulak not merely as the scapegoat for all of the economic woes of the local village poor, but as a scapegoat which had to be sent into the wilderness of exile.[185] Trumped-up charges and accusations were marshalled against the wealthier Mennonite farmers. They were often charged with failing to meet their grain quotas and taxes, being czarist loyalists, and agitating for emigration.[186] In some Mennonite villages, only a few of the wealthier Mennonite peasants were arrested, imprisoned, and either resettled in another village or province, or exiled to such destinations as the Solovets Islands, Arkhangelsk, Siberia, or the Ural mountains.[187] The villages of Grünfeld (Kriwoj-Rog), Blumenort (Kronau), Ohrloff (Kronau), and Nikolaital (Pjatichatki), for example, each saw only two people exiled in 1929.[188] But in some predominantly Mennonite communities local government officials were so zealous in their endeavors to exile anyone who remotely fit into their own vacillating definition of kulak that they exiled an alarming number of Mennonites from Ukraine and the Crimea.[189] The village of Nikolaifeld (Kronau), for instance, witnessed eleven people exiled, while the village of Karlinowka (Boshedarowka) saw sixteen Mennonites banished to the north.[190] Moreover, in the region surrounding the village of Ohrloff (Molotschna), an extensive campaign against Mennonite kulaks was undertaken in the early spring of 1929. One witness to this campaign made the following observations in his diary on May 5, 1929:

> This was Easter Sunday. The day before yesterday it was reported from Regional Headquarters at Melitopol that sixty Mennonite families had been exiled, including the well-known Mennonite leader, Philip P. Cornies of Ohrloff....On the seventh of May his whole property was confiscated.[191]

From the data furnished above it is clear that there was a great disparity in the numbers of people exiled from the various Mennonite villages in 1929; some Mennonite communities witnessed the banishment of entire families, while others were left completely unscathed or saw the expulsion of only a few people.[192]

These variations in the number of people exiled in the various Mennonite villages are also evident in an analysis of the number of people exiled from the nineteen Mennonite communities in the Chortitza volost. Some of the villages in this _volost_ recorded a particularly high tally of Mennonites banished in 1929. For instance, thirty-six people were exiled from the village of Burwalde, forty-two from the village of Kronstal, and fifty-six from the village of Nikolaifeld.[193] The remaining villages in the Chortitza _volost_, however, witnessed a relatively low number of Mennonite exiles. In the town of Chortitza itself (the town with the largest population in the _volost_), only four people were exiled, and in Hochfeld and Einlage there were three people banished from each village.[194] Franzfeld and Nieder-Chortitza each saw two people exiled while the villages of Neuendorf and Osterwick both witnessed one exile apiece. At the same time, the villages of Adelsheim, Blumengart, Kronsweide, Neuhorst, Neuenburg, Rosenbach, Rosengart, Schöneberg, and Schönhorst were more fortunate and saw no exiles in 1929.[195]

As is evident from these data, the differences between the number of people exiled in the various Mennonite villages in the Chortitza _volost_ is significant, and these differences demand some explanation. One possible reason for the differences has already been alluded to earlier -- the degree of zealousness and antagonism of the local activists in the various Mennonite villages. Those activists who had both a political and a personal vendetta against the wealthier Mennonite peasants were naturally more inclined to exile kulaks than those activists who had personal acquaintances or friendships with them. A second possible explanation for the village variations in the number of people exiled is that some villages were more industrialized and therefore affected less directly by the dekulakization and collectivization measures than other villages.[196] This appears to be the case with the towns of Chortitza and Einlage, which had broader industrial economic bases, and were not as dependent on the agricultural economy as the other Mennonite villages in the volost. Both of these villages had a relatively low number of exiles (four people were exiled from Chortitza and three from Einlage).

In addition to differences in the degree of local activists' zealousness, two other factors that may have accounted for the disparities in the number of people exiled from the various agricultural villages of the volost were variations in village solidarity and the willingness of certain villages to collectivize.[197] In Adelsheim, for example, one Mennonite teacher attributed the village's good fortune of having no one exiled to the fact that "the ingenuity and intrigue of the leaders failed to classify a number of farmers as kulaks.... [because of the] perspicacity, unity, and stability of all levels of the population, including the so-called poor class."[198] For this village, close cooperation and economic stability staved off any endeavors to exile local Mennonite peasants. On the other hand, the lack of village solidarity in Burwalde, together with the social tensions between Mennonites and local Ukrainians, appears to have been the reason why such a high percentage of Mennonites from this village found themselves on railway cattle cars bound for the Ural mountains. In the village of Rosengart, however, the inhabitants credited their ability to prevent anyone from being banished to their decision to bring together all of their resources and establish a collective in 1929. Rosengart's close proximity to the newly constructed Dnieper dam also helped to maintain a low rate of banishment in this particular village since foreign visitors to the dam who wanted to see a collective were often taken to Rosengart to see a model commune.[199]

The factors of village solidarity and the willingness to collectivize help to explain many of the differences in the number of people exiled from the various farming communities in the Chortitza volost, but there are two other factors which ought to be considered along with these explanations: village opposition to dekulakization, and the arrest and exile of hundreds of Mennonites who went to Moscow in a desperate and, more often than not, futile endeavor to obtain exit visas in the late fall of 1929.[200] It seems that in some of the villages with high rates of exiles, the inhabitants initially tried to actively oppose the dekulakization and collectivization measures; as a consequence of this opposition, local officials punished the entire village by exiling a significant segment of its population.[201] Moreover, it is possible that the villages of Nikolaifeld, Burwalde, and Kronstal had a greater number of inhabitants who went to Moscow and were arrested there or when they returned to their homes in Ukraine and the Crimea after their entreaties to emigrate went unheeded by Soviet emigration officials.[202] Nevertheless, whatever the exact reasons were for the variations in the number of people exiled from Mennonite villages in Chortitza, the alarming number of people banished to the north was interpreted by many Mennonites as an ominous sign of things yet to come.

Indeed, the future did not hold many promising prospects for the Mennonites of Ukraine and the Crimea. Weakened economically by the grain quotas and taxes, isolated politically by the loss of electoral rights, persecuted religiously by the curtailment of their religious rights, and threatened physically with imprisonment or banishment, those Mennonites who had not yet been exiled now had to determine which options would insure their economic, political, religious, and physical survival.

One option was simple and popular, but offered very little hope: that option was to wait out the present storm and hope that the present woes and difficulties would soon pass.

A second viable option for some Mennonites was to join a local collective or state farm. Although the real push to collectivize the peasantry did not begin until 1929, Mennonite peasants already felt political and economic pressure in 1928 to join a local collective.[203] In Chortitza, for example, Olga Rempel reported that dekulakization measures (self-tax, grain-quotas, and disenfranchisement) compelled some people to join the collective.[204] Another Mennonite from the Baratow region noted that there were large land-cooperatives being established in the area, and that these cooperatives received both machinery and money from the state in order to attract new members and insure the survival of the commune.[205] Yet despite the mounting economic and political pressures to collectivize, the majority of Mennonites still refrained from jumping onto the collectivization band wagon, and the collectivization efforts of local officials during 1928 had limited success in most of the predominantly Mennonite regions.[206] In the Molotschna _raion_ -- where regional government districts were reorganized in the late months of 1928 and where the Mennonite villages of Molotschna and Prischib were now located -- some _toz_-type kolkhozes and artels were established, but the vast majority of the population remained on their individual private farms.[207] This _raion_, which had a population of 48,872 people in late 1928 and consisted of 163,761 dessiatines of land, had the following numbers of agricultural communes, cooperatives and societies: 1 soviet state farm and 3 communes (with 71 members and 436 dessiatines of land), 7 agricultural artels (with 120 members and 1041 dessiatines of land), 74 societies for communal working of the land, 24 tractor cooperatives, 29 livestock cooperatives, 4 milking cooperatives, 3 garden cooperatives, 2 soil improvement cooperatives, and 1 poultry cooperative.[208] Although the above figures appear to indicate that the collectivization process had begun to take root in the Molotschna raion, these figures must be understood in light of the fact that 9,491 private farms still existed in the raion at this time.[209] To be sure, some Mennonite peasants took advantage of the economic benefits of living in a kolkhoz, but the vast majority still preferred to remain on their own land.

With the more volatile economic, political, and religious climate of 1929, however, there was a greater temptation to exchange the bedeviled life of private farming, with its high taxes and grain quotas, for the apparent economic security of life in a collective (as it was often portrayed by government officials). Some Mennonites succumbed to this temptation, arguing that it was not greed, but economic circumstances which compelled them to join a collective.[210] Their arguments were based not only on the realities of higher taxes and grain quotas, but also on the increasing number of community collectives that were commandeering village stores and selling food and other commodities exclusively to commune members.[211] In such villages, those Mennonites who were not commune members often had no alternative but to purchase their food at outrageous prices in private markets which the Soviet government began to outlaw in 1929.[212] Moreover, the kolkhozes in some villages took advantage of their majority in village meetings to force independent farmers to join the collective.[213] Such economic and political arm-twisting tactics, along with the fact that the communes often received the best land in a region, forced some Mennonite farmers to quickly sell their property and join the local commune in 1929. Yet while readily acknowledging that commune life promised some economic advantages, many Mennonites could not bring themselves to join the local commune -- at least not at this time. This was because the government largely prohibited the practice of religious faith in kolkhozes by banning such activities as preaching, proselytizing, and religious instruction; many Mennonites therefore equated joining a commune with compromising their religious beliefs. Moreover, the government's policy of forbidding the admission of Mennonite clergymen into kolkhozes only strengthened the resolve of many Mennonites to resist the trend toward collectivization.[214] Despite the apparent economic and political advantages of belonging to a kolkhoz, joining one was not yet a viable option for a sizable portion of the Mennonite community since abiding by the religious restrictions of a kolkhoz was tantamount to a renunciation of religious faith.

Aside from joining a kolkhoz, another option which offered some Mennonites hope for a better life was to move to those regions in the outlying provinces in the Soviet Union that the Soviet government wanted to settle. To encourage farmers from Ukraine to move to such isolated areas as the Caucasus and the Far Eastern Republic, the governments of these provinces undertook czarist-like colonization schemes which offered prospective settlers land and cash grants, tax concessions, and railway subsidies for the shipment of livestock and farm machinery.[215] Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea were particularly interested in the colonization programs of the Far Eastern Republic, and in 1927 and 1928 Mennonite families from Ukraine, the Crimea, as well as other regions such as Siberia and Samara sold their property, packed up their personal possessions, and moved to the Amur region of the Far Eastern Republic near the city of Blagoveshchensk. Here they established the Usman colony (consisting of 5 villages and about 600 people) on the Topkochna River, and the colonies of Shumanovka (consisting of 8 settlements and 867 people) and Savitaia (consisting of 5 villages and 520 people) near the Amur River. As well, the Mennonites also established the major settlement of Nevzorovka in the vicinity of the Amur River.[216] Although forced collectivization did not permit any more major colonization endeavors after the summer of 1928, a small trickle of Mennonites from Ukraine, the Crimea, and other regions still continued to make their way to the Amur region in the years following 1928.[217] This migration to the Far Eastern Republic was instigated by reports that Mennonites in the Amur region were crossing the Amur River and escaping into China. On sleds in the winter and on rafts in the summer, whole villages were able to make their way across the Amur to freedom.[218] Although the Mennonite refugees faced numerous hardships in China, and were forced to wait for months and even years before they were permitted to emigrate from China to Canada, the United States, or South America, many of them were more than willing to put up with these major difficulties in exchange for eventual freedom.[219]

The Amur River escape route into China was a pathway to freedom for hundreds of Mennonites, but another more popular route that allowed thousands of Mennonites from Ukraine and the Crimea to leave the Soviet Union was through the acquisition of government permission and passes to emigrate legally to the West. The reason why the emigration option was so popular with the Mennonite community was because during the period between July 1923 and April 1927 approximately 17,166 Mennonites from across the Soviet Union were successful in their attempts to emigrate -- either through Mennonite organizations such as the VBHH and the AMLV or by their own means (see Tables E and F in the Appendix).[220] But while the emigration option had been relatively successful for the Mennonites during much of the New Economic Policy, this option was no longer viable when the Soviet government significantly slashed its emigration quotas from the middle of 1927 until November of 1929. During this period, the Soviet government not only closed its borders, but also made it more difficult for Mennonites to complete the emigration process. Bureaucratic red tape, opposition from the Soviet press and local village authorities, and a decrease in the number of medical inspectors (who determined who was medically fit to leave the country) were some of the

Soviet emigration hurdles which many Mennonites found impossible to clear.[221] In addition to this, it became increasingly more difficult to obtain an emigration passport; local authorities were becoming less willing to grant emigration passports to Mennonites, and the cost of exit visas was doubling and even tripling every few months.[222] In the early spring of 1928, for example, an emigration passport was 50 rubles. By the late summer of that same year, however, it was 100 rubles, and by the spring of 1929 the price had risen to between 250 and 350 rubles.[223] Since all prospective immigrants over sixteen years of age were required to have an exit visa (which was only valid for three months), many of the larger Mennonite families with older children found it impossible to raise sufficient funds to buy visas for the entire family.[224] Although many Soviet Mennonites received large sums of money from friends and relatives in North America to assist in the purchasing of passports, very few Mennonites made it through the emigration maze.[225] Consequently, only 1,230 Mennonites from across the Soviet Union were permitted to leave the U.S.S.R. during the period between April of 1927 and November of 1929.[226]

The relatively low success rate for emigration did not provide much solace or hope for the thousands of Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea who still wanted to leave the Soviet Union, but an event in August of 1929 made the option of emigration a feasible one once again, and triggered a major Mennonite exodus from the Soviet Union. The event was the successful petition of a group of Mennonite families who left Siberia in the late fall of 1928 and who came to Moscow requesting permission from Petr G. Smidovich (an influential and important member of the Central Executive Committee) to emigrate.[227] After Smidovich granted their request, and twenty-nine Mennonite families from Siberia started their journey to Germany on August 10, the news of the success spread like wildfire throughout the Mennonite colonies.[228] Believing that the possibilities for obtaining exit visas were now very good, thousands of Mennonites from Ukraine, the Crimea, Siberia, Orenburg, Samara, Ufa, and the Don immediately prepared to leave for Moscow.[229] Some Mennonites tried to sell their possessions as quickly as possible to raise sufficient funds to help finance the trip; others simply abandoned their homes, farms, and property and left for the Soviet capital.[230] Within a very short time, Mennonite families from all over the Soviet Union began to arrive and settle in the suburbs of Moscow. By September 18, 250 families (over 1000 people) had taken up temporary residence in the suburbs, and by September 29 the number of families had increased to 400. Four days later on October 3, an additional 200 families arrived, bringing the total number of Mennonite families in Moscow to 600.[231] Yet, despite the colder climate of October and November, repeated warnings by the Soviet government that exit visas would no longer be granted, and government measures intended to prevent other Mennonites from leaving their villages, Mennonite families continued to migrate to the suburbs of Moscow.[232] By the end of October, there were over a thousand Mennonite families in Moscow, and by mid-November over 13,000 ethnic German refugees, more than ten thousand of whom were Mennonites, had found their way to the Soviet capital.[233] Since many of the Mennonite families had left their homes with very little personal property and were saving what little money they had to buy passports, the majority of the Mennonite refugees had no alternative but to live in squalid conditions. Forced to pay exorbitant rents, Mennonite families often bunked together and shared one or two small rooms in order to cut down expenses.[234] At the same time, the inflated Moscow prices for bread (ranging from 11.5 to 32 rubles per kilogram) and other staples made it impossible for some Mennonites to buy sufficient food for their families.[235] Yet despite their dismal living conditions, the perseverance and determination of the Moscow refugees seldom faltered, and they patiently waited for several weeks and in some cases several months until the Soviet government was forced to make a decision concerning their fate.

In the end it was the refugees' perseverance, coupled with the diplomatic efforts of the German government that eventually compelled an obstinate Soviet government to allow over 5000 Moscow refugees to leave the U.S.S.R.[236] The government's change of heart was indeed remarkable considering that Soviet officials had initially been unwilling to allow a major Mennonite emigration movement to take place. The perseverance of the Mennonite refugees was exemplified in the actions of 323 people who comprised what was later called the "Kiel group."[237] Since the continuous inflow of refugees and their dispersion throughout the many suburbs of Moscow made it impossible to form a single committee to represent the petitions of all of the refugees, the Kiel group decided to take its fate into its own hands. Despite the government's threats to send them back to their home villages, the members of the Kiel group wrote up their own petition to emigrate and were able to have it presented to both G. Zinoviev, the chairman of the Comintern, and M. Kalinin, the president of the Soviet Union.[238] Although the petition fell on deaf ears with respect to the two Soviet officials, the group remained undaunted in its efforts. On the advice of a representative from the Communist party, the group staged a demonstration of Mennonite mothers and children in the waiting room of President Kalinin's office, and mailed petitions to six "leading official organizations" of the Soviet government on October 25, 1929.[239] In the petitions, the Mennonites stated that "if for any reason the government authorities were to decide against the granting of passports, there would be nothing left for the refugees to do but to gather as a mass of suffering people in Red Square, the center of Moscow, and die there before their very eyes."[240] Within a few days, the group received news from the Ministry of the Interior that exit visas would be available to the group under two conditions: that all of the required documents for emigration be assembled, and that each adult passport be purchased at the sum of four hundred rubles.[241] Without reservation, the group provided the required documents and paid 77,000 rubles for the visas. On October 30, the Mennonite refugees left for Leningrad in train cars bearing the inscription pereselentsy (resettlers).[242] On November 1, they boarded the ocean liner Dzherzhinsky in Leningrad and sailed to Germany, arriving in Kiel on November 3, 1929.[243]

It was the undaunted perseverance of the members of the Kiel group that finally allowed them to emigrate in late October 1929, but it was the diplomatic negotiations of the German government that eventually made it possible for thousands of other refugees to cross the Soviet border in November of 1929. Because the overwhelming number of refugees were ethnic Germans, the German government took it upon itself to negotiate an emigration package with the Soviet government on behalf of the refugees in October of 1929.[244] German attaches and consuls were sent to Moscow, and preparations were made in the German embassy to help facilitate the transportation of the ever-growing multitudes of refugees. On October 19, 1929 the Soviet government informed the German embassy in Moscow that four to five thousand refugees would be allowed to emigrate on the condition that another country would be willing to accept them.[245] The German foreign office received reassurances from B. H. Unruh, the leading spokesman for the Mennonites in

Germany, that the emigration agreements of the early 1920's between the Canadian Mennonite relief organizations and the Canadian government were still intact, and that the refugees would be able to settle in Canada.[246] As a result of these efforts and negotiations, both the German and Soviet governments gave their stamps of approval to the emigration plan, and the Soviets began preparing for the exodus.[247]

The success of the exodus was totally dependent upon Canada being the final destination point for the refugees. But when the Canadian government announced on October 30 that it could not receive any emigres until the spring of 1930 due to its high unemployment rate, the plan was not just put on hold, but appears to have been abandoned.[248] One immediate consequence of Canada's decision was that the German government, which saw itself only as an intermediary in the process, announced that with the exception of the 323 refugees who had just arrived in Kiel, it would not assume responsibility for the German refugees until the entire matter was clarified.[249] Another immediate consequence of Canada's announcement was that the Soviets now began to make threats to either send the bothersome refugees back to their homes or forcibly deport them to Siberia.[250] Although both the Germans and the Soviets were very partial to sending the refugees to Canada, neither country could afford to abide by Canada's request to wait until spring before deciding the fate the refugees.

Without doubt, the German government realized that the Soviet threats to either send back the Moscow refugees or exile them were not empty words; but at the same time, the German government was not economically prepared to receive and host the large number of emigres. In response to the government's dilemma, B. H. Unruh assured the German Foreign Office that the Mennonite communities in North America and in Europe would help to provide the refugees with financial and material aid. Moreover, Unruh appealed to non-Mennonite churches and relief agencies (such as *Brüder in Not*) which also promised to assist the ethnic German emigres stranded in Moscow.[251] These efforts, along with the enthusiastic public support initiated by the German newspapers, helped to raise over six million *Reichsmarks* which were earmarked for providing transportation and accommodation for the refugees.[252] But while this huge fund-raising effort had taken only a few weeks, the Soviets had already sent home or exiled over eight thousand refugees.[253] Thanks to the tenacious negotiating and diplomatic efforts of the German government, however, the massive evacuation of the Moscow refugees finally stopped on November 25.[254] At this time, the Soviet authorities consented to permit nearly all of the remaining 5,500 refugees to emigrate to Germany.[255] Within a fortnight, this fortunate group of emigres (of which 3,485 were Mennonite) crossed the Soviet border and found refuge in Germany.[256]

The last-minute diplomatic efforts of the German government certainly saved the day for over five thousand refugees; but the Canadian government's new immigration policy combined with the indecisiveness and delayed action of the German government in the early weeks of November 1929, put the fate of over eight thousand refugees into the hands of the exasperbated Soviet government. Immediately after the Canadian government put forward its "wait-until-spring" ultimatum to the Soviet and German governments, the Soviet government, through the strong-arm tactics of the G.P.U., began to arrest and imprison Mennonite men. Since the Mennonites were seen as the instigators and perpetrators of the entire ordeal, they were initially singled out and arrested.[257] Within a few weeks, however, the G.P.U. no longer arrested only Mennonite refugees, but incarcerated refugees from all of the religious confessions (Lutheran, Baptist, Evangelical, Adventist, and Catholic); by November 16, the authorities had taken into custody approximately one thousand people.[258] On November 17, the Soviets put into operation their plan to forcibly transport some of the refugees back to their home provinces, and exile others to remote northern regions.[259] In carrying out this plan, which involved bringing the refugee families to the Moscow train station and loading them into coal or cattle rail cars, the G.P.U. employed a number of approaches.[260] One approach involved duping the refugee families into believing that they had been allowed to emigrate to the West and that the trains onto which they were being loaded were going to take them out of the country.[261] Another approach entailed separating the Mennonite fathers (or heads of households) from their families in order to coax the families to board the railway cars voluntarily. To accomplish this, G.P.U. officials forced the Mennonite men who had been in police custody for some time, as well as those who had just been arrested, to sign statements indicating that they were going back home "voluntarily."[262] In order to insure that the voluntary signatures were obtained, many men were put into locked, unventilated rooms which were then "heated to a baking temperature."[263] After obtaining the signatures, the G.P.U. officials then brought many of these Mennonite men to the railway station where they would eventually be loaded into cattle cars and transported to their home provinces.[264] Other Mennonite men, however, were not as fortunate; they were kept in prison and later exiled.[265] At the same time, the families of the arrested men were then told by G.P.U. officials that their husbands and fathers were at the railway station, and that they (the families) were also required to go to the train station if they wanted to be reunited with their loved ones.[266] Some of the wives and children went passively to the train station with the officials, but other women protested, fearing that their husbands were still in jail. Regardless of whether they were healthy, ill, or pregnant, those women who protested and refused to leave were usually beaten, bound hand and foot, and then loaded into vehicles and taken away to the train station.[267] As a result of this brutal treatment by G.P.U. officials, several women and children died before they even reached the railway loading docks.[268] One Mennonite from the Crimea observed the following spectacle:

> [The G.P.U.]...came into the living quarters, loaded the families into trucks and drove them to the railroad station. Women whose husbands were jailed bravely resisted this maneuver, for they did not want to go without their husbands. Four women suffered a tragic death through these tactics of the G.P.U. One of the women threw herself out of the truck three times. She would not go along without her beloved husband. As punishment she was given three lashes across her back with the sword by a G.P.U soldier. With that she went along on the truck with the others. We, too, were loaded by force into a car and taken into the station. Very soon thereafter the freight cars were pulled into the station and we were pushed into them. There were 42 persons who crowded into this freight car. And on the platform of the station there was an immense crowd of people! An incredible spectacle unfolded before our eyes: children were crying, old people were moaning and groaning and weeping. The distress and the disaster which befell us couldn't possibly be described in human language.[269]

Some refugees were loaded into unheated cattle cars carrying between forty to sixty people, and sent away without any food provisions; many of these refugees died in transit on their way to their home villages or to the work camps in the north.[270] One Mennonite witness vividly described the carnage that resulted from the brutal round-up, transportation, and evacuation of the Mennonite refugees:

> Very often the women and children were bound like cattle, thrown onto trucks, loaded into stock cars, and then sent back. Those from the Crimea traveled nine days, those from

> Siberia for three weeks in severely cold weather.... As a result of this use of brute force many children suffered broken arms and legs. Pregnant women gave birth on pavements or on trucks and both mother and child died within hours. Many became mentally and emotionally ill. Those sent back in spite of promises had nothing to eat, no roof, etc., so that they all faced hunger and possible death. There was horror and terror of which only he has an idea who understands Russian conditions. Many families were torn asunder....About 8,000 are sent back.[271]

Death was certainly not an uncommon occurrence among the refugees, and most of its victims were children. One participant reported that the bodies of thirty-five children were unloaded onto the platform at one of the train stations enroute to the Mennonite villages in the south. On a train bound for Siberia, another Mennonite observed that at one station the corpses of sixty dead children had to be carried out of the cattle cars by their Mennonite parents.[272] This tragic loss of life, along with the fact that family members were often separated and shipped to different destinations left many Mennonites in desperate straits.[273]

And what was the fate of most of the Mennonite refugees who came back to their abandoned homes in Ukraine and the Crimea? Having returned home financially bankrupt, and having discovered that their homes had been looted while they were away, most Mennonites faced an immediate future of poverty and starvation.[274] Although some families received aid and assistance from their Mennonite and Ukrainian neighbors, many families were unable to acquire any bread and food, even though the Soviet government had promised to supply them with flour and bread.[275] Moreover, since all of the names of refugees had already been put on the G.P.U. "black list" in Moscow, the refugees were now branded as "agitators" for emigration and "outlaws" who threatened the security of the Soviet state.[276] These "agitators" and "outlaws" were now punished by such measures as exorbitant taxes, eviction from their homes, imprisonment, banishment to the north, and in some cases, execution.[277]

The inhuman treatment of the Moscow refugees after their forced evacuation from Moscow was the culmination of a two-year period of increasingly oppressive Soviet measures that left much of the Mennonite community in Ukraine and the Crimea economically, politically, religiously, and socially crippled. Throughout 1928 and 1929, the outrageous grain quotas, continually rising taxes, and mercurial food and commodity prices pushed many Mennonite farmers (both kulak and non-kulak) up to and finally over the brink of ruin. At the same time, these oppressive economic measures initiated the beginning of the end of individual farming within the Mennonite communities and destroyed any remaining incentives for farmers to be economically self-sufficient. Moreover, the measures designed to isolate the Mennonites politically from participating in the policy-making process at the village level -- by changing the rules concerning village commune meetings and disenfranchisement -- destroyed the assurances for limited economic and political self-determination that were previously possible during the New

Economic Policy. The Soviet measures and laws concerning religion introduced in 1929 only compounded the woes of the Mennonite community. The government-endorsed League of the Godless, the atheistic propaganda campaigns, the oppressive laws concerning church services and proselytizing, the closure of churches, the introduction of the uninterrupted work week, the eradication of religion from the school room, and the aggressive attempts to weaken the Mennonite peace position were all viewed as government endeavors to eradicate the powerful role of religion and the pervasive influence of clergymen within the Mennonite community. The arrest, imprisonment, and exile of Mennonite clergymen and laymen only confirmed the community's suspicions of the government's present and future intentions. Yet while all of the oppressive economic, political, and religious measures of 1928 and 1929 provided a clear indication of what Stalin intended to accomplish during his "Second Revolution," it was the brutal and inhuman treatment of the Mennonite refugees during and after the flight to Moscow that gave the Mennonite community a preview of what was to come in the immediate future. For the Mennonites, the Moscow ordeal was a slightly scaled-down version of the "brutal cycle of mass terror and inhumanity" that characterized Stalin's "Second Revolution."[278] At the same time, the ordeal initiated one of the most significant, as well as one of the most tragic periods in the history of the Mennonite people.

Endnotes for Chapter II

1 See Robert Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1986), p. 115.

2 For works which deal specifically with Ukraine during this period, see Bohdan Krawchenko, Social Change and National Consciousness in Twentieth-Century Ukraine (London: Macmillan, 1985), pp. 46-112; Robert S. Sullivant, Soviet Politics and the Ukraine, 1917-1957 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 140-174; James E. Mace, Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918-1933 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983); Hryhory Kostiuk, Stalinist Rule in the Ukraine: A Study of the Decade of Mass Terror (1929-39) (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960).

3 See Roy A. Medvedev, Let History Judge (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), pp. 77ff; Sheila Fitzpatrick, The Russian Revolution (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 110; Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, pp. 78f; Moshe Lewin, Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 19f, 36; Moshe Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, trans. Irene Nove and John Biggart (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), pp. 155ff, 199, 217, 250; I. Deutscher, Stalin, A Political Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 310f; Dorothy Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), pp. 315, 318; Sullivant, Soviet Politics and Ukraine, 1917-1957, p. 154. See also Robert Conquest, The Great Terror (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 12f.

4 Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930, pp. 316f; Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, pp. 87f; Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, pp. 172ff, 214ff.

5 Medvedev, Let History Judge, p. 79.

6 Fitzpatrick, The Russian Revolution, p. 114.

7 Otto Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende des Russlanddeutschen Bauerntums in den Jahren 1927-1930 (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1942), pp. 4ff, 12ff.

8 Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, p. 217.

9 Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 90; Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, pp. 218, 230f; Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, pp. 4ff; Fitzpatrick, The Russian Revolution, p. 114. According to Robert Conquest, Article

107 "laid down prison terms and confiscation for persons causing a deliberate rise in prices, or failing to offer their goods for sale. It had never been intended for use against the peasantry, but as a measure against the 'speculator' middleman." Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, pp. 91f. Atkinson also notes that the article was used to penalize peasants accused of hoarding grain. Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930, pp. 319, 323.

10 See Y. Taniuchi, "A Note on the Ural-Siberian Method," Soviet Studies, 33 (1981), pp. 528ff; Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930, pp. 328f; Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, pp. 224, 282; Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, pp. 90f, 98; Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, pp. 16f, 30f.

11 Taniuchi, "A Note on the Ural-Siberian Method," p. 528. See also H. J. Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, trans. George G. Thielman (Yarrow, British Columbia: Columbia Press, 1964), pp. 20ff, 25ff; Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, p. 261.

12 Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 182.

13 KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh, II (1953), p. 663, as cited in Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 113. See also Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930, p. 360; Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, p. 461.

14 Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 113; Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930, p. 358.

15 KPSS v rezoliutsiiakh, II (1953), p. 663, as cited in Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 113.

16 Medvedev, Let History Judge, p. 83. See also Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 27; Johannes Philipps and Leo Oks, Die Tragische Odyssee der Russland Deutschen (Hannover: Karl-F. Bangemann, 1985), pp. 177f; G. Lohrenz, "Kollektivisierung," Mennonitisiche Warte, 4 (March, 1938), pp. 84-94. See also James R. Millar, "Mass Collectivization and the Contribution of Soviet Agriculture to the First Five-Year Plan: A Review Article," Slavic Review, 33 (December, 1974), pp. 750-766; Janusz Radziejowski, "Collectivization in Ukraine in Light of Soviet Historiography," Journal of Ukrainian Studies, 9 (Fall, 1980), pp. 3ff; Atkinson, The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930, p. 349; Herbert J. Ellison, "The Decision to Collectivize," in Russian Economic Development from Peter the Great to Stalin, ed. William L. Blackwell (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), p. 243; Stephen Osofsky, "The Contemporary Kolkhoz, Kolkhoz Democracy and the Transition to All-People's Property: A Study of the Kolkhoz in Transition" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1968), pp. 32f.

17 Naum Jasny, *The Socialized Agriculture of the USSR* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1949), p. 39; Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 99. See also Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, p. 279.

18 Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, p. 453.

19 Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, pp. 314f; Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 99. For a detailed analysis of the first Five-Year Plan, see Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, pp. 344f.

20 Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, p. 315.

21 Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, p. 80; Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, pp. 92f; Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, pp. 323f; Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, pp. 20f, 41.

22 Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, pp. 238f; Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, pp. 327, 334.

23 Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, p. 491; Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, pp. 100f, 107. See also Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, p. 124; M. Maksudov, "Ukraine's Demographic Losses 1927-1938," in *Famine in Ukraine, 1932-1933*, ed. Roman Serbyn and Bohdan Krawchenko (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1986), pp. 28f.

24 Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, pp. 94ff.

25 Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 238ff.

26 *Pravda*, 29 December 1929, as cited in Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 117. See also Lewin, *Russian Peasants and Soviet Power*, pp. 469ff; Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, p. 358; Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev*, p. 286.

27 *Pravda*, 29 December 1929, as cited in Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 114. See also Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, p. 358.

28 *Pravda*, 25 November 1929, as cited in Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 114.

29 Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 114.

30 *Pravda*, 29 December 1929, as cited in Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 115.

31 Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 137; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 229.

32 "Grünfeld, Baratow, den 4 März," *DB*, 11 April 1928, p. 3; "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," *MR*, 18 April 1928, p. 11. See also C. Klassen, "What Forced Us to Leave Soviet Russia," Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, p. 5.

33 "Ein Schrei aus der Not," *DB*, 28 March 1928, p. 3; "Aus einem Privatebriefe von der Molotschna," *DB*, 2 May 1928 p. 3; "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," *DB*, 9 May 1928, p. 3; "Aufruf," *ZB*, 5 September 1928, p. 4. A Mennonite from Molotschna reported that he was required to sell grain at seventy-two kopecks per pood. "Aus einem Privatebriefe von der Molotschna," *DB*, 2 May 1928 p. 3. Another farmer from Gnadenfeld (Molotschna) wrote that he and others had to sell their grain to the government at very low prices; as a result, they would not have enough money to buy bread until the next harvest. "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," *DB*, 9 May 1928, p. 3. Government representatives in one region in Ukraine bought wheat at one ruble and ten kopecks per pood, barley at seventy kopecks, and corn at eighty kopecks per pood. "Wolodjenka, Cherson Kreis, Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 3. It should be noted that Mennonite farmers in some regions in Ukraine were not permitted to sell grain to private speculators. "Sergejewka, Süd-Russland," *MR*, 4 April 1928, p. 6.

34 "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 29 August 1929, pp. 9ff; "Aufruf," *ZB*, 5 September 1928, p. 4; "Nachrichten von der Molotschna," *DB*, 22 August 1928, pp. 3f. Olga Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, ed. Gerhard Ens (Winnipeg, Manitoba: CMBC Publications, 1979), p. 73. Peasants in the small town of Chortitza were required to supply 61,000 poods of grain in 1928. "Aus der alten Heimat: Aus einem Briefe von Osterwick, Chortitzer Rayon," *DB*, 19 September 1928, p. 3. One Mennonite farmer from Fürstenland pointed out that he was required to sell his crops to the government for a ridiculous price despite the very low yields of his crops. In order to feed his family, the farmer had to buy grain at six to eight rubles per pood on the black market. "Aufruf," *ZB*, 5 September 1928, p. 4.

35 In Chortitza grain was frequently swept up from the floors of the granaries and taken away to "feed the hungry of the cities." Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 73.

36 "Aus einem Privatebriefe von der Molotschna," *DB*, 2 May 1928 p. 3. At one Mennonite village the grain consumption per person per month was set at ten kilograms. "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," *MR*, 18 April 1928, p. 11.

37 "Aus einem Privatebriefe von der Molotschna," *DB*, 2 May 1928, p. 3.

38 "Alexanderkrone, Molotschna, Russl.," *MR*, 20 February 1929, p. 7; "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht von Fürstenwerder, Mol.," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. Every person in Chortitza was only permitted to mill one pood of grain per month. "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

39 "Bericht aus der Krim," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. Grain quotas in the Chortitza *volost* were determined according to the amount of machinery each farmer owned. Those farmers who did not own a threshing machine were required to supply twenty-five poods of grain; those farmers who did own a threshing machine were ordered to deliver one hundred poods of grain. "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. See also "Auszug aus einem Briefe aus der Chortitzer Wolost," *DB*, 23 October 1929, p. 4. A Mennonite farmer from the Crimea harvested 110 poods of wheat, 96 poods of barley, and 33 poods of oats. He was later ordered to deliver 234 poods of grain. This quota was higher than the entire amount of grain that he had harvested. "Bericht aus der Krim," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

40 Lane, *Christian Religion in the Soviet Union*, p. 201; Krause, *Gnadenfeld*, p. 12. Requisitioned grain from a number of Mennonite settlements in the Crimea region was redistributed to various peasant groups and livestock cooperatives. In some areas, every kulak received twelve poods of grain per year, every middle farmer received fifteen poods per year, and every poor farmer received eighteen poods per year. Every farmer who owned a horse was also given an additional twenty poods of grain per year. "Aus der Krim," *DB*, 30 October 1929, p. 4. Clergymen in many regions were not permitted to receive any grain from the government. "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 6 March 1929, pp. 8f.

41 "Bericht aus Fürstenwerder, Molotschna," *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4.

42 "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; J. Martens, *So wie es war: Erinnerungen eines Verbannten* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: John Froese and Gerhard Martens, 1963), p. 9. Two farmers from Chortitza were each ordered to supply eight hundred poods of grain to the government. "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. One Mennonite from Liebenau (Molotschna) harvested four hundred poods of grain from his fields and was subsequently ordered to deliver nine hundred poods of grain to the government elevators. Jacob Rempel, *Liebenau* (Winnipeg: By the Author, 1977), p. 240.

43 "Süd-Russland, den 1. September 1929," MR, 9 October 1929, pp. 12f. Both winter wheat and spring wheat were grown on many Mennonite farms in Ukraine and the Crimea. The winter wheat was usually sown in late summer or early fall. The spring wheat was often sown in the early months of spring.

44 "Bericht aus Fürstenwerder, Molotschna," DB, 20 November 1929, p. 4; Olgafeld, Fürstenland, den 10 August 1929," MR, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f, 16; "Zentral, Govn. Woronesch," DB, 4 April 1928, p. 3. Local authorities in some regions allowed farmers to sell their grain in local markets. "Bericht aus Osterwick, Chort. Gebiet. Am 21 Okt. 1929," DB, 4 December 1929, p. 4.

45 "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus Osterwick, Chort. Gebiet. Am 21 Okt. 1929," DB, 4 December 1929, p. 4. According to one Mennonite farmer, grain expropriators working for the government were paid very high salaries for their work. The farmer reported that the expropriator from a nearby village received 150 rubles per month. The expropriator also received an additional commission of 10 kopecks for every pood of grain that he brought to the government elevator. "Aus Russland," ZB, 27 November 1928, p. 8.

46 "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus der Krim," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4. See also Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 101; Maksudov, "Ukraine's Demographic Losses 1927-29," p. 28. A farmer who was unable to pay his penalty fines was often forced to sell his livestock, machinery, and land in order to pay his fines and purchase additional grain. See "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

47 "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus der Krim," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

48 "Bericht aus Fürstenwerder, Molotschna," DB, 20 November 1929, p. 4.

49 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11; "Bericht aus Grünfeld (Baratow)," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4; Martens, So wie es war, p. 11.

50 See Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, pp. 7ff, 41.

51 "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," MR. 23 May 1928, p. 11; "Kurze Auszüge aus Briefen," DB, 29 February 1928, p. 3; "Wolodjenka, Chersoner Kreis, Russland," MR, 29 August 1928, p. 7; "Nachrichten aus der alten Heimat (Baratow), DB, 11 July 1928, p. 3; "Aus der alten Kolonie -- Nikolaipol," DB, 23 May 1928, p. 3; "Neu-Halbstadt, Sagradowka, den 24.

April," *DB*, 30 May 1928, p. 3; "Halbstadt," *DB*, 23 May 1928, p. 3; "Schönsee, 20 April 28," *DB*, 6 June 1928, p. 3; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 30 May 1928, pp. 9f; "Muntau, den 13. Mai 1928," *DB*, 27 June 1928, p. 3; "Waldheim, den 28 Mai," *DB*, 3 July 1929, p. 3; "Landwirschaftl. Brief aus Südrussland -- Orlowo (Kr. Melitopol)," *DB*, 8 November 1928, p. 3; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 4 April 1928, p. 7. See also "Die Boten des Friedens in Not," *ZB*, 4 July 1928, p. 3; "Alexanderkrone, Molotschna, Russl.," *MR*, 20 February 1929, p. 7; "Olgafeld, Fürstenland den 10 August 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f.

52 Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 73; "Aus einem Briefe von Osterwick Chortitzer Rayon," *DB*, 19 September 1928, pp. 2f. See also "Chortitzer, den 14 März," *DB*, 11 April 1928, p. 3; "Aus Neuendorf," *DB*, 1 November 1928, p. 4; "Einem Briefe vom 9, Juli aus Klippenfeld, Süd-Russland," *DB*, 5 September 1928, p. 3. J. Rempel notes that the average yield of winter wheat in the Liebenau (Molotschna) region amounted to ten poods per dessiatine. Rempel, *Liebenau*, p. 154.

53 "Ein Schrei aus der Not," *DB*, 28 March 1928, p. 3; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 30 May 1928, pp. 9f; "Wolodjenka, Chersoner Kreis, Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 7.

54 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," *MR*, 18 April 1928, p. 11. Some Mennonite peasants who owned two or more horses were not permitted to receive any seed from the government. "Das heutige Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 3.

55 "Wolodjenka, Cherson Kreis, Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 7.

56 "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 2 May 1928, p. 11; "Der Orkan in der Ukraine (Halbstadt, den 26. April, 1928)," *DB*, 6 June 1928, p. 2; "Das Steuersystem und die schwere wirtschaftliche Lage in der Molotschna," *DB*, 13 June 1928, p. 3; "Muntau, den 13 Mai 1928," *DB*, 27 June 1928, p. 3; "Wolodjenka, Cherson Kreis, Russland," *MR*, 27 August 1928, p. 7; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 29 August 1928, pp. 9ff; "Unwetter in der Krim," *DB*, 8 November 1928, p. 3; "Landwirschaftl. Brief aus Südrussland -- Orlowo (Kr. Melitopol)," *DB*, 8 November 1928, p. 3. See also Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 152.

57 "Halbstadt, Molotschna, den 26. April 1928," *DB*, 23 May 1928, p. 3; "Nachrichten von der Molotschna," *DB*, 22 August 1928, pp. 3f; "Eine Brief vom 9. July aus Klippenfeld, Süd Russland...," *DB*, 5 September 1928, p. 3; "Aus Neuendorf," *DB*, 1 November 1928, p. 4; "Landwirschaftl. Brief aus Südrussland -- Orlowo (Kr. Melitopol), *DB*, 8 November 1928, p. 3; "Olgafeld, Fürstenland den 10 August, 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f.

58 "Alexanderkrone, Molotschna, Russl.," *MR*, 20 February 1929, p. 7. See also "Aus Neuendorf," *DB*, 1 November 1928, p.

4; "Georgestal, Fürstenland," *MR*, 28 November 1928, pp. 8f; "Kurman-Kemeltschie, Krim," *MR*, 28 November 1928, pp. 8f; "Sofiewka, Post Tiege, Chersoner Kreis den 16 Sept. 1928," *MR*, 24 October 1928, p. 3.

59 "Olgafeld, Fürstenland den 10 August, 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f. In 1928 the average yield of grain in the Tiegerweide (Molotschna) region was between fifteen and twenty poods per dessiatine. "Komm heim!," *MR*, 27 March 1929, p. 9. A farmer from Osterwick (Chortitza) recorded the following crop yields in 1928: 20 poods of winter wheat from 4 dessiatines of crops, 116 poods of spring wheat from 3 dessiatines of crops, 160 poods of barley from 4.5 dessiatines of crops, 130 poods of oats from 3 dessiatines of crops, and 15 poods of rye from 1.33 dessiatines of crops. "Aus der alten Heimat. Aus einem Briefe von Osterwick Chortitzer Rayon," *DB*, 19 September 1928, pp. 2f. See also "Kurze Nachrichten," *DB*, 19 September 1928, p. 3; Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, pp. 34f.

60 "Kurman-Kemeltschie, Krim," *MR*, 28 November 1928, pp. 8f.

61 "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Lichtfeld, Südrussland," *MR*, 26 June 1929, p. 12; "Fürstenwerder, den 24. Febr. 1929," *MR*, 1 May 1929, p. 12; "Aus dem Gnadenfelder Bezirk," *DB*, 22 May 1929, p. 3; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 29 May 1929, p. 12; "Olgafeld, Fürstenland, den 10. August 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 15 May 1929, p. 9. See also "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 12 June 1929, p. 9.

62 "Von Jasykowo (Ukraine)," *DB*, 3 July 1929, p. 3; "Rosental bei Chortitza," *DB*, 24 July 1929, p. 3; "Liebe Eltern und Geschwister!," *MR*, 31 July 1929, p. 12. There were reports of people drowning in the villages of Rosental, Schönhorst, Neuendorf, Jasykowo, Nikolaipol, and Chortitza. One Mennonite reported that excessive flooding in the city of Jekaterinoslaw resulted in the deaths of nearly two hundred people. See "Von Jasykowo (Ukraine)," *DB*, 3 July 1929, p. 3.

63 "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Lichtfeld, Südrussland," *MR*, 26 June 1929, p. 12.

64 "Nachricht aus einem Mennonitendorfe in Süd-Russland," *MR*, 18 September 1929, p. 12; "Pawlowka, Russland," *MR*, 3 July 1929, p. 12. See also "Drehende Hungersnot," *DB*, 30 October 1929, p. 4.

65 "Olgafeld, Fürstenland, den 10 August 1929," *MR*, 13 November 1929, pp. 12f. The average farmer in the Nikolaipol region harvested between five and twenty-five poods of grain per hectare. "Tarasowka bei Moskow den 3. Oktober 1929," *MR*, 13 November 1929, p. 12.

66 "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 28 August 1929, pp. 12. See also "Olgafeld, Fürstenland, den 10 August 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f. Caterpillar plagues in some villages such as Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk) threatened to destroy many crops. "Schönwiese bei Alexandrowsk, den 11 August 1929," *DB*, 11 September 1928, p. 3.

67 "Nachrichten von Jasykowo. Am 28 Juni 1929," *DB*, 7 August 1929, p. 3; "Nikolaipol, August 1929," *DB*, 9 October 1929, p. 4. In 1929 there was a good harvest in Liebenau (Molotschna). The farmers in the region harvested about thirty poods of wheat per dessiatine, and between thirty and forty poods of barley per dessiatine. Rempel, *Liebenau*, pp. 132, 154.

68 "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

69 *Ibid*.

70 "Das heutige Sowjetrussland," *MR*, 1 August 1928, pp. 2f.

71 See Rempel, *Liebenau*, p. 144.

72 "Neplujew, Süd-Russland. den 3. December 1928," *MR*, 6 February 1929, p. 6; "Süd-Russland, den 1 Juni 1928," *MR*, 4 July 1928, pp. 8f. The price of wheat in some regions in Fürstenland ranged between six and eight rubles per pood. "Aufruf," *ZB*, 5 September 1928, p. 4.

73 During the summer of 1928, the prices of commodities in the Wolodjenka region were as follows: corn flour was four rubles per pood, potatoes were two rubles per pood, butter was between forty-five and fifty kopecks per pound, and ten eggs were twenty kopecks. "Wolodjenka, Cherson Kreis, Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 7. See also "Süd-Russland, den 1 Juni 1928," *MR*, 4 July 1928, pp. 8f.

74 "Waldheim, Molotschna, Russland," *MR*, 20 February 1929, p. 8; "Rosenbach, Russland," *MR*, 5 June 1929, p. 12.

75 A Mennonite from Chortitza wrote that high-quality flour was often more than ten rubles per pood at the local market. He noted that much of the flour sold at the market was mixed with chalk before it was given to the customers. "Die gegenwärtige Lage in Chortitza," *DB*, 14 March 1929, p. 3. In the early months of 1929, wheat flour sold for ten rubles per pood in Olgafeld (Fürstenland); barley flour sold for nine rubles per pood. "Olgafeld Fürstenland, den 10 August 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f, 16. In Osterwick (Chortitza) plain flour sold for fifteen rubles per pood and wheat flour sold for twenty rubles per pood in April of 1929. "Osterwick, den 8. April 1929," *DB*, 29 May 1929, p. 3. A

Mennonite from the Melitopol region wrote that second-rate flour sold for twenty rubles per pood. He also noted that many peasants considered corn bread and barley bread to be delicacies. "Nachrichten von Schönwiese bei Alexandrowsk," DB, 17 April 1929, p. 3. In some areas of Ukraine a pood of wheat was 6 rubles and a pood of barley or millet was 2.5 rubles in the spring of 1929. "Süd-Russland," MR, 8 May 1929, p. 12. A Mennonite from Crimea reported that one sack of chaff sold for one ruble in the first week in January of 1929. By the end of January, however, the price of that same sack of chaff had risen two rubles. "Werter Editor!," MR, 26 June 1929, p. 12.

76 A Mennonite from Osterwick (Chortitza) wrote that a pood of flour was 12 rubles, a half liter of sunflower oil was 1.2 rubles, and a kilogram of sugar was 1.44 rubles. "Bericht aus Chort. Gebiet. Am 21 Okt. 1929," DB, 4 December 1929, p. 4. See also "Osterwick, Süd-Russland," MR, 21 August 1929, p. 12; "Werter Freund!," MR, 20 November 1929, pp. 12f. During the summer of 1929, barley was three rubles a pood, rye was four rubles a pood, and wheat was seven rubles a pood in the Molotschna region. "Ausländisches," MR, 28 August 1929, p. 12. See also "Tarasowka bei Moskau," MR, 13 November 1929, pp. 12f.

77 "Konteniusfeld, Russland," MR, 31 July 1929, p. 12. Livestock fodder was very expensive and in short supply in Sergejewka (Fürstenland). Some Mennonites who could not afford to purchase fodder took straw from the thatched roofs of their houses and fed it their livestock. "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," MR, 29 May 1929, p. 12.

78 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11; "Sofiewka, Post Tiege, Chersoner Kreis den 16 Sept. 1928," MR, 24 October 1928, p. 3.

79 The average horse in Liebenau (Molotschna) sold for over 155 rubles in 1927. Rempel, Liebenau, p. 145.

80 "Wolodjenka, Cherson Kreis, Russland," MR, 29 August 1928, p. 7. Livestock prices in Chortitza dropped to record levels in 1928. A Mennonite from Chortitza noted that he bought a horse for 120 rubles in the winter of 1927-1928. In August of 1928, however, he was unable to sell the horse for more than fifteen rubles. "Chortitza," DB, 5 September 1928, p. 3; "Wolodjenka, Cherson Kreis, Russland," MR, 29 August 1928, p. 7.

81 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11; "Chortitza," DB, 5 September 1928, p. 3. There was an overabundance of cattle in the livestock markets in some regions of Ukraine. This caused livestock prices to drop and many Mennonites were forced to sell their cattle at undervalued prices.

82 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," MR, 29 May 1929, p. 12.

83 While the prices of grain and livestock were inflated in 1929, the price of agricultural machinery stayed below average in 1928 and 1929. In the autumn of 1929, a threshing machine that was worth between four hundred and five hundred rubles could be bought for as little as one hundred rubles. Hay mowers were sold for thirty rubles, and wagons (which were normally worth two hundred rubles apiece) were sold for fifty rubles. "Werte Freund!," MR, 20 November 1929, pp. 12f.

84 "Reinfeld, den 20 Januar 1929," MR, 1 May 1929, p. 12.

85 "Osterwick, den 8. April 1929," DB, 29 May 1929, p. 3

86 "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," MR, 29 May 1929, p. 12.

87 "Werter Editor!," MR, 26 June 1929, p. 12. See also "Liebe Eltern und Geschwister," MR, 31 July 1929, p. 12.

88 "Werter Editor!," MR, 26 June 1929, p. 12.

89 "Werte Freund!," MR, 20 November 1929, pp. 12f.

90 "Alexandrowka, Sagradowka, (Auszug aus einem Briefe) Den 27, Dez. 1929," DB, 12 February 1930, p. 4. See also "Tarasowka bei Moskau, den 3 Oktober 1929," MR, 13 November 1929, pp. 12f.

91 "Süd-Russland," MR, 4 July 1928, pp. 8f.

92 "Chortitza," DB, 5 September 1928, p. 3. There were also long lines of people at the local bread stores in other villages such as Muntau (Molotschna). "Aus Russland," ZB, 30 May 1928, pp. 9f.

93 "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," MR, 6 June 1928, p. 6.

94 "Nachrichten von der Molotschna," DB, 22 August 1928, p. 3; "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," DB, 9 May 1928, p. 3; "Chortitza, den 9 Mai 1928," DB, 27 June 1928, p. 3; "Aus Russland," ZB, 14 April 1928, p. 7; "Sofiewka, Post Tiege, Cherson Kreis. den 16 Sept. 1928," MR, 24 October 1928, p. 3.

95 "Sergejewka, Süd-Russland, den 3. Februar 1929," MR, 13 March 1929, p. 9; "Aus Russland," ZB, 15 May 1929, p. 9; "Haskett, Man., (Osterwick, den 9. Januar)," MR, 24 April 1929, p. 12; "Osterwick, den 8. April 1929," DB, 29 May 1929, p. 3; "Fürstenwerder, den 24. Feb. 1929," MR, 1 May 1929, p. 12. See also "St. Martin, Man.," MR, 22 May 1929, p. 12; "Das Neue Einlage und der Dnjepr," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4;

"Russland, den 24 Februar 1929," *MR*, 10 April 1929, p. 6; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 20 March 1929, pp. 11f. Members of professional organizations in Chortitza received a pound of bread per day; their family members, however, only received eight ounces of bread per day. "Die gegenwärtige Lage in Chortitza," *DB*, 14 March 1929, p. 3.

96 "Osterwick, den 8. April 1929," *DB*, 29 May 1929, p. 3; "Altenau, Sagradowka. Russland," *MR*, 8 May 1929, p. 12.

97 "Konteniusfeld, Russland," *MR*, 31 July 1929, p. 12; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 28 August 1929, p. 12; "Schoñwiese bei Alexandrowsk," *DB*, 24 July 1929, p. 3; "Pawlowka, Russland," *MR*, 3 July 1929, p. 12; Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 74; "Lidenau, Post Molotschna, Melitopol Kreis 14 Juli 1929," *MR*, 4 September 1929, pp. 12f; "Nachricht aus einem Mennonitendorfe in Süd-Russland," *MR*, 18 September 1929, p. 12; "Bericht aus Osterwick, Chort. Gebiet. Am 21. Okt. 1929," *DB*, 4 December 1929, p. 4; "Waldheim, Molotschna, Russland," *MR*, 20 February 1929, p. 8; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 23 October 1929, p. 12. See also "Drohende Hungersnot," *DB*, 30 October 1929, p. 4; "Altenau, Sagradowka. Russland," *MR*, 9 May 1929, p. 12. Mennonites in villages such as Waldheim (Molotschna) also died from starvation. "Waldheim, Molotschna, Russland," *MR*, 20 February 1929, p. 8.

98 "Schönwiese bei Alexandrowsk," *DB*, 24 July 1929, p. 3. See also "Bericht aus der Krim. Den 25. September 1929," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

99 "Sergejewka, Süd-Russland, den 3. Februar 1929," *MR*, 13 March 1929, p. 9. See also "Pawlowka, Süd-Russland, d.29. Jan.," *MR*, 13 March 1929, p. 9; "Olgafeld, Fürstenland, den 10. August 1929," *MR*, 6 November 1929, pp. 12f.

100 "Pawlowka Süd-Russland, d.29. Jan.," *MR*, 13 March 1929, p. 9; "Haskett, Man., (Osterwick, den 9. Januar)," *MR*, 24 April 1929, p. 12; "Osterwick, Süd-Russland," *MR*, 21 August 1929, p. 12. See also "Fürstenwerder, den 24. Feb. 1929," *MR*, 1 May 1929, p. 12; "Tiegenhagen, Russland," *MR*, 26 June 1929, p. 12; "Pawlowka, Russland," *MR*, 3 July 1929, p. 12. There were severe shortages of firewood in villages such as Georgstal (Fürstenland). Some Mennonites burned weeds from their gardens in order to warm their homes and cook their meals. "Georgestal Fürstenland," *MR*, 28 November 1928, p. 9. See also "Süd-Russland," *MR*, 8 May 1929, p. 12; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 23 October 1929, p. 12.

101 See Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, pp. 30ff; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 20ff; Krause, *Gnadenfeld*, p. 12; Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev*, p. 287.

102 See also Conquest, *A Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 98.

103 Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 23f.

104 "Chortitza," *DB*, 5 September 1928, p. 3.

105 "Chortitza," *DB*, 5 September 1928, p. 3. A Mennonite farmer from Neuendorf (Chortitza) wrote that he was required to pay three hundred rubles in taxes. "Aus Neuendorf, Chortitzer Wolost," *DB*, 1 November 1928, p. 4. See also "Nachrichten von der Molotschna," *DB*, 22 August 1928, p. 3; "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," *DB*, 9 May 1928, p. 3.

106 "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 4 April 1928, p. 7; "Letzte Nachrichten von der Molotschna," *DB*, 22 February 1928, p. 3; "Aus dem Privatbriefe eines Lehres," *DB*, 22 February 1928, p. 3; "Aufruf," *ZB*, 5 September 1928, p. 4.

107 See C. F. Klassen's report in *Bericht über die Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz*, ed. Christian Neff (Karlsruhe: Heinrich Schneider, n.d.), p. 57; "Das heutige Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 3.

108 Joshua Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," in *Aspects of Religion in the Soviet Union: 1917-1967*, ed. Richard H. Marshall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 80.

109 "Chortitza," *DB*, 5 September 1928, p. 3. For a biography of A. P. Toews, see Remple, *Einer von vielen*. See also Töws, *Mennonitische Märtyrer*, 1:79ff.

110 "Franzfeld (Chortitza)," in *CGWD*, container 150, reel 4, images 477-516.

111 See Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, p. 90; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 25; "Die Entwickelung der Dinge in Russland," *MR*, 17 July 1929, p. 12.

112 See "Ein Schrei aus der Not," *DB*, 28 March 1928, p. 3; "Sergejewka, Süd-Russland, den 5 März, 1928," *MR*, 4 April 1928, p. 6; "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," *MR*, 18 April 1928, p. 11; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 2 May 1928, p. 11; "Das heutige Russland," *MR*, 29 August 1928, p. 3. A Mennonite from Tiegerweide (Molotschna) reported that he was required to pay the following taxes in 1928: 440 rubles in income tax, 44 rubles in voluntary self-tax, 15 rubles in government tax, and 25 rubles in insurance. "Komm heim!," *MR*, 27 March 1929, p. 9. Peasants in some regions benefited from the self-tax. In Tiegerweide (Molotschna), for instance, a school was built from the funds collected from the voluntary self-tax. "Komm heim!" *MR*, 27 March 1929, p. 9. For a discussion of the government's implementation of the self-tax, see Taniuchi, "A Note on the Ural-Siberian Method," pp. 528f; Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905-1930*, pp. 320f, 331ff;

Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, pp. 90f; Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, pp. 16f, 30f.

113 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11.

114 A party activist in each village usually supervised the collection of various taxes. The activist often worked together with a five-person "elected commission" that was responsible for the collection of the taxes. Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 25.

115 "Neu-Halbstadt, Sagradowka, den 24 April," DB, 30 May 1928, p. 3. Peasants in other villages in the Molotschna region were also required to purchase high-priced obligations. See "Letzte Nachricht von der Molotschna," DB, 22 February 1928, p. 3.

116 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 25, 27. In the Molotschna region, the breakdown of peasant taxes in 1928 were as follows: plowed land was taxed 30 rubles per dessiatine, leased land was taxed 22 rubles per lease, rented land was taxed 8 rubles, and pasture land was taxed 24 rubles per dessiatine. Land that was used for gardens was also taxed according to the category to which it belonged. A garden in category 1 was taxed 225 rubles per dessiatine, a garden in category 2 was taxed 140 rubles, and a garden in category 3 was taxed 75 rubles. The taxes for livestock were as follows: each horse was taxed 24 rubles, each cow was taxed 28 rubles, each pig was taxed 8 rubles, and each sheep was taxed 2 rubles. The agricultural tax was increased in the following manner. For a peasant owning 25 dessiatines of land or less, the tax was increased 1 ruble. The tax increased to 6 rubles for the farmer who owned between 26 and 100 dessiatines. Every peasant who owned between 101 and 200 dessiatines of land saw a tax increase of 11 rubles. The taxes of a farmer who owned between 201 and 350 dessiatines of land rose by 18 rubles. Every farmer who farmed between 351 and 550 dessiatines of land saw his taxes increase 24 rubles. For farmers who owned more than 550 dessiatines of land, there was an 18 ruble increase, and an additional 25 ruble increase for every 100 dessiatines of land which exceeded 550 dessiatines of land. At the same time, however, there was a 20-ruble discount for every person in the family. For those families with less than 5 people and with a gross income of less than 90 rubles, there were no taxes. Those families with more than 5 people and with a gross income of less than 110 rubles were also not taxed. Any family that earned a gross income of more than 5 rubles above these limits was required to pay all of the taxes. The "self-tax" was based upon individual units of income. The first 150 rubles of gross income constituted the first unit of income. The second unit of income was between 150 and 200 rubles; this unit was assessed a 25-ruble voluntary self-tax. A

peasant who belonged to the third unit of income (200 to 300 rubles) was required to pay 45 rubles in voluntary taxes. A farmer who belonged to the fourth unit of income (300 rubles) had to pay 60 rubles in voluntary taxes. Every 10 rubles of additional income above 300 rubles constituted a new unit of income. For example, an income of 500 rubles corresponded to 22 units of income; an income of 1000 rubles corresponded to 72 units of income. With each unit of income there were corresponding increases in the voluntary taxes. The obligations (bonds) that a farmer was required to pay were assessed in a similar manner as the voluntary self-tax. Each person who had a gross income of 300 rubles was required to purchase a portion of an obligation for 5 rubles. The manner in which various taxes were levied to an ordinary farmer can be seen in the following example. A farmer harvested 157 poods of winter wheat from 1 dessiatine of land. He also harvested 72 poods of rye from a dessiatine of land, 120 poods of corn from 2.5 dessiatines of land, 21 poods of sunflowers from 0.5 dessiatine of land, 26 poods of millet from 0.5 dessiatines of land, 57.5 poods of barley from 0.25 dessiatines of land, 28 poods of potatoes, approximately 400 poods of beets, and approximately 13 poods of dry fruit. He received approximately 72 rubles per year from the sale of his cow's milk. The farmer also owned a pig. After selling his crops and produce the farmer was required to pay 160.52 rubles in taxes for the period of time extending from August of 1927 to April of 1928. "Das Steuersystem und die schwere wirtschaftliche Lage an der Molotschna," DB, 13 June 1928. p. 3.

117 "Aus einem Privatbriefe von der Molotschna," DB, 2 May 1928, p. 3. In one Mennonite village, each obligation was twenty-five rubles. "Das heutige Russland," MR, 29 August 1928, p. 3. See also "Grünfeld, Baratow, den 4 März," DB, 11 April 1928, p. 3.

118 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 24.

119 "Ein Schrei aus der Not," DB, 28 March 1928, p. 3; "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," DB, 9 May 1928, p. 3; "Aufruf," ZB, 5 September 1928, p. 4; "Alexanderkrone, Molotschna, Russl.," MR, 20 February 1929, p. 7; "Grünfeld, Baratow, den 4 März," DB, 11 April 1928, p. 3.

120 "Ein Schrei aus der Not," DB, 28 March 1928, p. 3; "Aus einem Briefe von Russland," MR, 11 April 1928, p. 11; "Aus Neuendorf, Chortitzer Wolost," DB, 1 November 1928, p. 4. A Mennonite from Gnadenfeld (Molotschna) wrote that the increases in income taxes, self-taxes, state bonds, and loans were intended to bankrupt the kulak class. "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," DB, 9 May 1928, p. 3.

121 "Bericht von der Molotschna," *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4. See also Hermann Rempel, *Erinnerungen eines Russland-Deutschen*, (Enkenbach: n.p., 1979) p. 46. A Mennonite from the Crimea noted that any farmer who had ever employed workers or who owned three or more cows usually had to pay higher taxes than his neighbours. "Ein Brief aus der Krim," *DB*, 3 April 1929, p. 4.

122 See "Bericht von Grünfeld (Baratow)," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus Chortitza, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht von Fürstenwerder, Mol. Den 1 Nov. 1929," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 31; "Bericht von der Molotschna," *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4; "Molotschna Kolonien, d. 18. März 1929," *MR*, 29 May 1929, p. 12; "Auszug aus einem Briefe aus der Chortitzer Wolost," *DB*, 23 October 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus Osterwick, Chort. Gebiet. Am 21 Okt. 1929," *DB*, 4 December 1929, p. 4.

123 "Rosental bei Chortitza," *DB*, 24 April 1929, p. 3; "Werte Redaktion der Rundschau in Amerika!," *MR*, 25 September 1929, p. 12; "Bericht aus Chortitzer, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Russland, den 24 Februar 1929," *MR*, 10 April 1929, p. 6. A Mennonite from the village of Hussarowka wrote that a number of local peasants were selling their possessions in order to survive. One peasant whose home originally cost three thousand rubles was forced to sell it for thirty-five rubles in order to pay his taxes. "Geld nach Russland," *MR*, 7 August 1929, p. 6.

124 A woman from Grünfeld (Baratow) was arrested because she could not pay her taxes. Local government officials also confiscated her property and sold it at a public auction. "Bericht von Grünfeld (Baratow)" *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. A Mennonite from Osterwick (Chortitza) wrote that high income and self taxes often did not leave him with enough money to purchase food, seed, or fodder. "Bericht aus Osterwick, Chort. Gebiet. Am 21 Okt. 1929," *DB*, 4 December 1929, p. 4. High taxes levied to families in Fürstenwerder (Molotschna) left many of them bankrupt. Government officials confiscated the land of many of these families and branded them as "experts" or kulaks. "Bericht von Fürstenwerder, Mol. Den 1 Nov. 1929," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. A man from Tomakowka (near Chortitza) was arrested because he failed to pay two hundred rubles in taxes and supply three hundred poods of grain. The man intended to pay the taxes and supply the grain, but he was arrested before he had an opportunity to do so. "Bericht aus Osterwick, Chort. Gebiet. Am 21 Okt. 1929," *DB*, 4 December 1929, p. 4.

125 Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 74. See also "Russland," *MR*, 13 November 1929, p. 12.

126 "Bericht von der Molotschna," DB, 20 November 1929, p. 4.

127 "Werte Freund!," MR, 20 November 1929, pp. 12f. A Mennonite elder from Grünfeld (Chortitza) was required to sell his property at very low prices in order to pay his taxes. "Verfolgungen und Verhaftungen," DB, 13 November 1929, p. 4.

128 "Verfolgungen und Verhaftungen," DB, 13 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht von Fürstenwerder, Mol. Den 1 Nov. 1929," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

129 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11.

130 Taniuchi, "A Note on the Ural-Siberian Method," p. 535. It should be noted that the political and administrative power of most peasant villages in Ukraine was controlled by local village soviets and communes during the New Economic Policy. In principle, the members of a village soviet were to be elected by universal adult suffrage, but during the New Economic Policy the soviet was predominantly controlled by party loyalists and authorities. Many of the political and economic decisions concerning the village were made by the chairman of the soviet who was often from a different village or region. Towards the end of the New Economic Policy, however, many of the middle and wealthier peasants obtained influential positions in village soviets across Ukraine. The government came to see this as a serious threat to its control over the village.

Together with the village soviet, the village commune exercised political power in the village. A vestige from pre-revolutionary Russia, the village commune was traditionally the centre of economic power in the village. In the first years of the New Economic Policy, the commune played a non-coercive role in carrying out policies for the government. With time, however, the commune became a more dominant factor in the political and economic life of the village, and eventually it employed the village soviet as its "agent for certain official purposes." Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 73.

By 1926, the vast majority of the village households belonged to the village commune which was steadily coming under the control of the wealthier peasants. The members of the skhod or village commune meeting were peasants who belonged to local households in the village and who were over eighteen years of age. Theoretically, everyone who was a member of the skhod was permitted to vote at the meetings, but generally it was usually only the heads of households who practiced their right to vote. This practice was reflected in the Soviet Agrarian Code which stipulated that a quorum for a village commune meeting consisted of half of the representatives of the households in the village. Ibid., p.

73. See also Alexander Erlich, "Stalin's Views on Soviet Economic Development," in Russian Economic Development from Peter the Great to Stalin, ed. William L. Blackwell (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), p. 230.

131 Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 90.

132 "Ein Brief aus der Krim," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4; Ehrt, Das Mennonitentum in Russland, p. 137; Rempel, Liebenau, pp. 228, 230, 239f; Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten unter dem Bolschewismus in Ruszland gesagt haben," pp. 30f, 35f.

133 Ehrt, Das Mennonitentum in Russland, p. 137; Rempel, Liebenau, pp. 228, 230, 239f.

134 "Tiegenhagen, Russland," MR, 26 June 1929, p. 12; "Das Steuersystem und die schwere wirtschaftliche Lage in der Molotschna," DB, 13 June 1928, p. 3; Rempel, Liebenau, pp. 239f. See also Krause, Gnadenfeld, p. 12; Moshe Lewin, "Society, State and Ideology during the First Five-Year Plan," in Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1928-1931, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), p. 59; Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, pp. 90, 101. Almost fifty percent of the inhabitants in some regions lost their right to vote. "Aus Russland," MR, 18 July 1928, p. 5.

135 "Das Steuersystem und die schwere wirtschaftliche Lage in der Molotschna," DB, 13 June 1928, p. 3.

136 "Margenau (Molotschna) den 4. April 1929," DB, 15 May 1929, p. 3; "Die Sowjetregierung unternimmt einen verstärkten Kampf gegen die Religion," DB, 15 May 1929, p. 3; "Ein Brief aus der Krim," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4. In many regions of the Crimea, any person who was considered to be a kulak was immediately disenfranchised. This meant that the peasant had to pay higher taxes and was not permitted to hold public office. A disenfranchised peasant was also not allowed to send his or her children to public schools. "Ein Brief aus der Krim," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4.

137 See C. F. Klassen's report in Bericht über die Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz, p. 57; Rempel, Einer von vielen, p. 73; Heinrich Woelk and Gerhard Woelk, A Wilderness Journey: Glimpses of the Mennonite Brethren Church in Russia, 1925-1980, trans. Victor Doerksen (Fresno, California: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1982), p. 12; "Das heutige Russland," MR, 29 August 1928, p. 3; "Lidenau, Post Halbstadt," DB, 29 November 1928, p. 3; Töws, Mennonitische Märtyrer, 1:95, 105, 210.

138 See "Ein Brief aus der Krim," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4; "'Generalsäuberung' in Russland," DB, 1 May 1929, p. 4;

"Margenau (Molotschna)' den 4. April 1929," DB, 15 May 1929, p. 3; ",Süd-Russland.," MR, 8 May 1929, p. 12; "Die Entwicklung der Dinge in Russland," MR, 17 July 1929, p. 12.

139 According to the historian Joshua Rothenberg, ambiguous Soviet policies concerning religion and education were replaced by "more forceful and aggressive measures" at the conclusion of the New Economic Policy. Rothenberg states that "an early expression of this reorientation was the substitution, in the spring of 1928, of the term 'antireligious education' for 'nonreligious education' in official documents." Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," p. 72.

140 See C. F. Klassen's report in Bericht über die Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz, p. 57. See also Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 137; Töws, Mennonitische Märtyrer, 1:95, 166, 210, 216; 2:303f; M. Martens, Stormy Tides: Religious Persecutions in Soviet Russia (Winnipeg, Manitoba: By the Author, 1940), pp. 1ff; "Reedly, Calf. (Aus einem Privatbriefe eines Predigers aus Russland entnommen)," MR, 2 January 1929, p. 6. In their analysis of the persecution of Mennonite ministers prior to, and during the years of 1928 and 1929, Heinrich and Gerhard Woelk make the following observations concerning government pressure directed towards Mennonite ministers:

> [The pressure]... became so heavy that many no doubt wished they had emigrated. The ministers lost their vote and, as disenfranchised, they were taxed on money and grain beyond any reasonable limit. These unpaid taxes were then taken as grounds to sell their possessions (houses and contents) at auction. The village government took the money to pay the "malicious tax debts" and the ministers, together with their families were left without shelter or means.

Woelk, A Wilderness Journey, pp. 11f.

141 C. F. Klassen's report in Bericht über die Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz, pp. 56f; Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 103; Toews, "The Mennonites in the Early Soviet Period," p. 107.

142 Töws, Mennonitische Märtyrer, 1:105; "Spat, Krim, Südrussland," DB, 29 November 1928, p. 3. In 1928, the government forced the AMLV to dissolve. According to C. F. Klassen, a former vice-chairman of the AMLV, the government dissolved the AMLV for the following reasons: the AMLV kept alive the illusion among the Mennonites that they had a right to their own cooperative and individual existence; the AMLV was always a hindrance in the program of sovietizing the

Mennonite colonies; and it had been a mistake for the central government to permit the establishment of the *AMLV* because it promoted Mennonite separateness which was entirely incompatible with the Bolshevik policy concerning the nationalities in Russia. See C. F. Klassen's report in *Bericht über die Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz*, p. 55. See also Toews, "Die Entwicklung der Mennonitische Kirche in Russland," p. 429. Peter Frose and Herman Dyck, two Mennonite administrators of the *AMLV*, were arrested in Moscow by the G.P.U. in 1929. Kornelius Reimer, the former accountant of American Mennonite Aid, was also arrested by the G.P.U. "Verfolgungen und Verhaftungen," *DB*, 13 November 1929, p. 4.

143 See "Auszug aus Br. Dicks Brief," *MR*, 27 February 1929, p. 7; "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Russland (Ukraine)....26. 1. 29," *MR*, 19 June 1929, p. 12; "Bericht von der Molotschna," *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus Fürstenwerder, Molotschna. Im September 1929," *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4. According to Isaak W. Reimer, there were approximately 1,005 Mennonite preachers in the U.S.S.R. in the late 1920's. Reimer notes that between eighty and ninety percent of these clergymen were eventually exiled or imprisoned. Seventy-five percent of the clergymen who were exiled eventually died in exile. Two Mennonite ministers also renounced their religious faith. See Isaak W. Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, pp. 992ff, 1666ff. A Mennonite from Margenau (Molotschna) wrote that a number of clergymen were evicted from government-sponsored collectives. Mennonite ministers were generally not allowed to join collectives. "Margenau (Molotschna) den 4 April 1929," *DB*, 15 May 1929, p. 3.

144 See Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 230; "Geld nach Russland, (Die Nachricht, dass Prediger....)," *MR*, 28 August 1929, p. 6; Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, pp. 992ff; "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Russland (Ukraine)," *MR*, 4 September 1929, p. 12; "Nachricht aus einem Mennonitendorfe in Süd-Russland," *MR*, 18 September 1929, p. 12; "Russland," *MR*, 13 November 1929, p. 12; "Das Wort Gottes in Russland," *MR*, 6 November 1929, p. 3; "Bolschewistische Wirtschaft," *DB*, 9 April 1930, p. 4. Some Mennonite clergymen were required to work on the Dnieper dam in 1929. Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, p. 523.

145 See B. H. Unruh, "Bericht zur Massenflucht der deutschen-russischen Bauern vom 24.X - 23. XI, 1929." pp. 1ff; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, pp. 130ff. See also Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, pp. 231ff; "Wanderungen," *MR*, 4 December 1929, p. 6.

146 See Töws, *Mennonitische Märtyrer*, 1:121, 149, 185, 246, 351; 2:113, 125, 205, 318ff, 331ff; "Russland, den 1 Dez. 1929," *MR*, 1 January 1930, p. 6.

147 In December of 1929, a Mennonite from Fürstenwerder (Molotschna) wrote that "many people were already in prison; many clergymen were also in prison after being accused of inciting the peasants to emigrate." "Fürstenwerder, den 15 Dez. 29.," *DB*, 22 January 1930, p. 4. See also Jacob Redekopp, *Es war die Heimat: Baratow-Schlachtjin* (Curitiba, Parana, Brasil: Ripografia, 1966), p. 67.

148 Töws, *Mennonitische Märtyrer*, 1: 30ff, 73ff; C. F. Klassen, "Die Kirchliche Entwicklung," (January-February 1949), Centre of Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, p. 7. See also Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," p. 318.

149 For an interesting report on the League of the Godless, see "Merkblatt des Gottlosen," *MR*, 30 October 1929, pp. 12f.

150 Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 73.

151 See "Die gegenwärtige Lage in Chortitza," *DB*, 14 March 1929, p. 3. There was an intensive anti-religious propaganda campaign in the Odessa region in 1929. During this campaign party activists offered anti-religious instructional sessions (that lasted for thirty hours) to peasants in order to gain more recruits for their anti-religious organizations. "Antireligiöse Propaganda unter der deutschen Bevölkerung im Odessaer Kreise," *MR*, 3 July 1929, p. 12.

152 "Deutsche antireligiöse Bibelzirkel in der Ukraine," *DB*, 25 December 1929, p. 4; "Antireligiöse Bibelzirkel," *Dein Reich Komme* (January, 1930), p. 14. See also "Das Wort Gottes in Russland," *MR*, 6 November 1929, p. 3. In order to demonstrate their contempt for religion, ardent atheists in some regions baptized their children "in the name of the godless." "Rote Taufen," *DB*, 30 October 1929, p. 4.

153 "--Aus der Molotschna, Südrussland...." *MR*, 10 April 1929, p. 6. See also "Wie die Kommunisten gegen Ostern kämpfen," *DB*, 24 July 1929, p. 3; "Sagradowka, Russland," *MR*, 3 April 1929, p. 9. A Mennonite from the village of Schönwiese (Alexandrowsk) wrote that very few people from the village still attended church. In August of 1929 there were only two elders, three men, twelve women, and seven small children who attended one of the local Mennonite churches regularly. "Schönwiese bei Alexandrowsk, den 11. August 1929," *DB*, 11 September 1929, p. 3.

154 Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," pp. 72f. See also J. A. Hebly, *Protestants in Russia*, trans. John Pott (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1976), p. 98; Paul Steeves, "The Experience of the Russian Baptists, 1922-1929" (M.A. thesis, University of Kansas,

1972), pp. 123ff, 136. The "Decree on Religious Associations" defined the new parameters of religious belief for the peasants. According to the law, every religious society was regarded as a local association. This association had to consist of at least twenty believing citizens who were all over eighteen years of age. In order for these associations to have worship services without being persecuted, they were required to register with local authorities. These associations were not allowed to collect funds for mutual assistance or associations of producers. Members of these associations were also not allowed to provide material aid to their co-religionists or to organize religious or group meetings (such as Bible, literature, sewing, manual labor, or religious instruction meetings) for children or young women and men. Moreover, the members of religious associations were not permitted to organize excursions or operate playgrounds for children. They were also not allowed to establish libraries, reading rooms, sanatoriums, and medical services. Only those books which were necessary for a specific religious service could be kept in the buildings which were used for religious services. The work area for clergymen and religious workers was restricted to the area where the church was located and where the members of the religious organization resided. See Hebly, *Protestants in Russia*, pp. 98f; Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," pp. 73ff; "Zur religiösen Lage in Russland," *Dein Reich Komme* (July, 1929), pp. 143ff; Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland*, pp. 135f; Giesinger, *From Catherine to Khrushchev*, p. 290. The "Instructions of the People's Commissariat of the Interior" clarified and supplemented the law of April 8, 1929. Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," p. 72. See also William C. Fletcher, *A Study in Survival: The Church in Russia 1927-1943* (London: S.P.C.K., 1965), pp. 44ff; "Der 'Bund der Gottlosen' und die neue religiöse Bewegung," *Dein Reich Komme* (January, 1930), p. 20; "Eine Interessante Anfrage!," *Dein Reich Komme* (June-July, 1930), pp. 157-161.

155 See Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," p. 73; Hebly, *Protestants in Russia*, p. 99; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 230; "Die Sektenbewegung in U.S.S.R.," *ZB*, 11 December 1929, pp. 13ff.

156 See "Süd-Russland," *MR*, 8 May 1929, p. 12; "Russland," *MR*, 7 August 1929, p. 12; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 15 May 1929, p. 9. See also "Aus Russland," *MR*, 18 July 1928, p. 5; "Die christlichen Gemeinschaften und die Rote Armee," *DB*, 30 October 1929, p. 4.

157 "Nachrichten von Jasykowo. Am 28. Juni 1929," *DB*, 7 August 1929, p. 3. See also "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Russland (Krim)," *MR*, 28 August 1929, p. 12; "Das Wort Gottes in Russland," *MR*, 6 November 1929, p. 3; Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, pp. 992ff.

158 "Bericht aus Rosental bei Chortitza. Den 11. August 1929," *DB*, 25 September 1929, p. 4. See also Töws, *Mennonitische Märtyrer*, 2:426.

159 Rothenberg, "The Legal Status of Religion in the Soviet Union," p. 81.

160 See "Auszug aus einem Briefe aus der Chortitzer Wolost," *DB*, 23 October 1929, p. 4; Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 74. A Mennonite from Rosental (Chortitza) wrote that after the introduction of the uninterrupted work week, every worker was given a day of rest on the sixth day of his particular work shift. In implementing this new work schedule, the government hoped that the factories and collectives would remain in continual operation. "Bericht aus Rosental bei Choritzer. Den 11. August 1929," *DB*, 25 September 1929, p. 4.

161 Children living in some regions of Ukraine were required to attend school on Sundays; their day of rest was on Wednesday. Many peasants were also required to work on Sunday. "Süd-Russland, den 1. September 1929," *MR*, 9 October 1929, p. 12; "Russland, den 1 Dez. 1929," *MR*, 1 January 1930, p. 6. For peasants in the Chortitza *volost*, every sixth day was to be a holiday from work or school; thus, the children were often required to attend school on Sundays. "Auszug aus einem Briefe aus der Chortizer Wolost," *DB*, 23 October 1929, p. 4.

162 See "Margenau (Molotschna) den 4 April 1929," *DB*, 15 May 1929, p. 3; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 13 March 1929, pp. 10f; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 29 August 1928, p. 11; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 12 December 1928, pp. 10f; "Bericht aus Russland," *MR*, 18 September 1929, p. 12; "Eine Stimme aus tiefer Not in Russland," *ZB*, 3 April 1929, p. 11. A Mennonite from Fürstenwerder (Molotschna) reported that many people were still attending church in spite of the difficult political and religious circumstances. "Bericht aus Fürstenwerder, Molotschna. Im September 1929." *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4. A Mennonite peasant from Halbstadt (Molotschna) wrote that some young people were resisting the mounting pressures to join the League of the Godless. "Bericht aus Halbstadt, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4. Eighty to ninety young people from Sagradowka (Kronau) participated in catechism instruction in the early months of 1929. "Sagradowka," *MR*, 3 April 1929, p. 9.

163 "Molotschna Kolonien, d. 18 März 1929," *MR*, 29 May 1929, p. 12.

164 In the summer of 1929, a Mennonite from Lidenau (Molotschna) wrote that there were a number men who still wished to become clergymen. "Lidenau, Post Molotschansk,

Melitopol Kreis, 14 Juli 1929," *MR*, 4 September 1929, pp. 12f. See also "Eine Stimme aus tiefer Not in Russland," *ZB*, 3 April 1929, p. 11; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 15 May 1929, pp. 9f; Töws, *Mennonitische Märtyrer*, 1:379; 2:130.

165 See "Die Boten des Friedens in Not," *ZB*, 4 July 1928, p. 3; "Aus Russland," *ZB*, 4 July 1928, pp. 12f. See also John B. Toews, "Documents on Mennonite Life in Russia 1930-1940: Part II -- Cultural and Intellectual Life," American Historical Society of Germans for Russia, Work Paper 20 (Spring, 1976), pp. 36-43.

166 Rempel, *Einer von vielen*, p. 73.

167 Woelk, *A Wilderness Journey*, p. 12.

168 *Ibid*. According to Heinrich and Gerhard Woelk, many "believing teachers" were dismissed from their positions. With time, all teachers who professed a religious faith were dismissed.

169 See "Ein brief aus der Krim," *DB*, 3 April 1929, p. 4; "Nachrichten von Jasykowo. Am 28. Juni 1929," *DB*, 7 August 1929, p. 3; "Bericht aus Halbstadt, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht von Fürstenwerder, Mol. Den 1. Nov. 1929," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Die Folgen bolschewistischer Erziehung," *DB*, 30 October 1929, p. 4.

170 "Süd Russland, den 1 September 1929," *MR*, 9 October 1929, p. 12. One Mennonite teacher often remained at home on Sundays while his wife was at church. He feared that that he would lose his job if he was seen attending church. "Pflichten eines mennonitischen Lehrers in Russland," *MR*, 5 June 1929, p. 12.

171 "Von der Konferenz deutscher Lehrer des Chortitzer Rayons," *DB*, 7 August 1929, p. 3.

172 *Ibid*. Within a large number of Mennonite communities, the peasants feared that the government was using the schools to control the thoughts of the Mennonite children. Many believed that the government was endeavoring to alienate the children from their parents. "Aus Russland," *MR*, 18 July 1928, p. 5.

173 One Mennonite teacher, Herman Dueck, was exiled to the Solovets islands in December of 1929. "Fürstenwerder, den 15 Dez. 29," *DB*, 22 January 1930, p. 4.

174 Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, pp. 101f. See also Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," pp. 269-314; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 227; Sawatsky, "Mennonites in Tsarist and Soviet Russia," pp. 16ff; Penner, *Mennoniten dienen in der Roten Armee*, pp. 1ff.

175 The article where the declaration appeared on November 7, 1928 was entitled "Die Jugend entlarvt den Schwindel der Prediger. Die Mennonitenjugend tritt in die Reihen der aktiven Verteidiger der S.S.S.R." In the declaration, the group made the following statements:

1. We believe that the Soviet Union is the only country which desires peace and that it was the duty of all citizens to serve such a country.

2. We testify that the reason we previously did not carry arms was because of the political activities of the ministers who wished to be comfortable in their positions. The Mennonite faith did not deny the right to carry arms especially because the Red Army was defending the exploited against the exploiters.

3. The ministers are actually collaborating with the wealthy. This was demonstrated in 1918 when the wealthy put pressure on the ministers to sanction self-defense which in turn obstructed the struggle of the poor in their bid to gain freedom and win back some of the wealth of the rich. According to Jesus' commandment to give to Caesar what was Caesar's... the Bible did not prohibit the taking of arms.

4. The ministers were involved in politics when they advised and helped us and other persons in being exempted from military service. This was a crime on their part.

5. We, the undersigned declare our readiness to enlist in the army and bid the government to enlist us. We call upon every person to do likewise.

"Die mennonitische Jugend in Russland bekennt sich zur Roten Armee," MR, 14 November 1928, p. 3. See also Ehrt, Das Mennonitentum in Russland, p. 146; Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," p. 317. The list of signatures at the bottom of the declaration included the names of forty-two people. The names of thirty-five people on the list were those of Mennonites from Crimea.

176 The title of the article in Das Neue Dorf (an organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party [Bolsheviks] of Ukraine) was "Die werktätige Mennonitenjugend ergreift die Waffe!." The article was published on November 25, 1928. Ehrt, Das Mennonitentum in Russland, p. 146. For other references to Mennonites who served in the Red Army, see Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 37.

~~177~~ As a result of this subdivision of the service terms, many Mennonites in the alternate service programs were prevented from working on their own farms for four or five growing seasons. This often brought economic hardship to the families of the men. Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," pp. 313f; "Das heutige Russland," MR, 29 August 1928, p. 3. In his analysis of how Mennonite youths reacted to the idea of serving in alternate service, H. J. Willms made the following observations:

> Our young men of military age were forced to report today to the Regional Military Headquarters at Melitopol in order to carry out their obligation to the state. It was a heartening fact to see that the overwhelming majority of our young men remained loyal to the faith of our fathers.
>
> It was gratifying to see that for many of our young men the faith and practice of the principle of nonresistance was a matter of conscience and that they were prepared and willing to suffer the consequences, even if it involved self-denial, humiliation, and contempt. It was gratifying to see that our young people tried hard to restore what had partially been lost and forsaken by our ethnic group during the years 1919 and 1920.

Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 38f.

178 See A. W. Janzen, "Ersatzdienst im Kiewer Gebiet, 1927-1928 (A. W. Janzen)," in Waffen der Wehrlosen: Ersatzdienst der Mennoniten in der UdSSR, ed. Hans Rempel (Winnipeg, Manitoba: CMBC Publications, 1980), p. 57. For an analysis of the experiences of Mennonites in the military service at this time, see Klippenstein, "Mennonite Pacifism and State Service in Russia," pp. 313-320.

179 See Rempel, "Ersatzdienst im Kiewer Gebiet, 1927-1928: Persönliche Erlebnisse" in Waffen der Wehrlosen, pp. 43-98. See also Johann J. Neudorf, Osterwick, 1812-1943 (Clearbrook, British Columbia: A. Olfert and Sons, 1972), p. 160.

180 For a discussion of the conditions, see Rempel, "Ersatzdienst im Kiewer Gebiet, 1927-1928: Persönliche Erlebnisse," in Waffen der Wehrlosen, pp. 43-98. See also "Aus Sibiriens Urwalde. Auszug aus einem Briefe," DB, 25 September 1929, p. 4. In a thousand-man military service unit in the Ural mountains, 600 men were Mennonite, 185 were Baptists, and the remaining 215 were Evangelicals. "Die christlichen Gemeinschaften und die rote Armee," DB, 30 October 1929, p. 4. For a description of the role of Mennonite ministers who acted on behalf of Mennonite men in the military service, see Töws, Mennonitische Märtyrer, 1:105; "Spat, Krim, Südrussland," DB, 29 November 1928, p. 3.

181 "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11; "Aus einem Privatbriefe von der Molotschna," DB, 2 May 1928, p. 3; "Aus Gnadenfeld in der Ukraine," DB, 9 May 1928, p. 3. One Mennonite who worked for a government association was arrested and imprisoned for eight months. He was charged with purchasing wheat from local farmers at inflated prices rather than at the lower prices set by the government. "Chortitza, den 14 März," DB, 11 April 1928, p. 3.

182 Rempel, Einer von vielen, p. 73.

183 "Neuenberg (Chortitza)" in CGWD, container 147, reel 2, image 261; "Kronstal (Chortitza)" in CGWD, container 147, reel 2, image 106.

184 Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 100. Before the government's definition of "kulak" was published in May of 1929, local authorities and activists employed their own criteria for branding peasants as kulaks. In May of 1929, however, the Council of People's Commissars produced a formal definition of a kulak farm which was supposed to help activists in their operations. The definition included the following five conditions of a kulak farm: 1) a farm which regularly employed labour; 2) a farm which undertook an "industrial enterprise" (such as milling, making butter, wood cutting, or similar facility which was powered by a motor, windmill, or water mill); 3) a farm which hired out complex, power-driven farm machinery on a a regular basis; 4) a farm which rented out its land for use as a dwelling or any enterprise; and 5) a farm whose members participated in commercial ventures or usury, or who received income which was not directly derived from manual labour (such as clergymen). Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, p. 490. Since these definitions were very ambiguous, the definition could be used to classify any peasant as a kulak. According to one Mennonite from the Osterwick (Chortitza) region, anyone who ate more than one loaf of bread a day and owned more than two horses was branded a kulak. "Osterwick, den 8. April 1929," DB, 29 May 1929, p. 3.

185 See Krause, Gnadenfeld, p. 12; Fast, "Mennonites of the Ukraine under Stalin and Hitler," p. 20; Aggie Klassen, "My Siberian Exile," n.d., Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, p. 1; Julius Loewen, Jasykowo, p. 56; Abram Kroeker, Results of Communism (n.p., n.d.), p. 5.

186 Many of the wealthier farmers were often accused of being former tsarist officials, officers, priests, or police. "'Generalsäuberung' in Russland," DB, 1 May 1929, p. 4. A common complaint of peasants in Adelsheim (Chortitza) was that the kulaks were to be blamed for every accident and disaster in the village. In many villages, the poorer peasants evicted the wealthier farmers from home and

province. "Adelsheim (Chortitza)" in CGWD, container 146, reel 1, images 3-42. In the village of Nikolaipol, the barns of landowners were burnt down by activists and poorer peasants. "Nikolaipol, den 2 April 1929," DB, 15 May 1929, p. 3. In Danilowka (Crimea), Heinrich Martens -- who worked in the administration of the Mennonite Agricultural society -- was incarcerated for thirty-three days after being accused of slander and attempting to obtain an emigration pass. "Danilowka, Krim, Russland," MR, 27 March 1929, pp. 8f. See also "Sagradowka, Süd-Russland, den 13. November 1929," MR, 11 December 1929, p. 6.

187 Some Mennonites who were branded as kulaks in 1929 were moved to so-called "kulak" villages. These villages were located in areas which were often agriculturally impoverished. Each kulak family in the village farmed a small plot of land that was often their only source of food. Already in the spring of 1929, three Mennonite families from Liebenau were moved to the kulak village of Oktoberfeld (Molotschna). Rempel, Liebenau, pp. 242ff. According to Isaak W. Reimer, eight families from Osterwick (Chortitza), three families from Nieder-Chortitza (Chortitza), and one family from Einlage (Chortitza) were resettled in kulak settlements. Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, pp. 542ff. See also Toews, "Documents on Mennonite Life in Russia 1930-1940: Part I -- Collectivization and the Great Terror," pp. 3ff; "Die Entwickelung der Dinge in Russland," MR, 17 July 1929, p. 12; "Bericht von Grünfeld, (Baratow)," DB, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," MR, 27 March 1929, p. 9; "Süd-Russland," MR, 8 May 1929, p. 12; "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Lichtfeld, Südrussland," MR, 26 June 1929, p. 12; "Aus Russland," ZB, 27 November 1929, p. 8; "Verfolgungen und Verhaftungen, DB, 13 November 1929, p. 4; "Tiege, Molotschna," MR, 26 February 1930, p. 13.

188 See "Grünfeld (Kriwoj-Rog)" in CGWD, container 150, reel 5, images 286-251; "Blumenort (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 154, reel 9, images 73-99; "Ohrloff (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 149, reel 4, images 401-445. For the number of people who were exiled from the village of Nikolaital (Pjatichatki), see the the general report on the villages of the Pjatichatki region in CGWD, container 150, reel 5, images 1-39.

189 "Süd-Russland," MR, 8 May 1929, p. 12.

190 See "Nikolaifeld (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 149, reel 4, image 333; "Karlinowka (Boshedarowka)" in CGWD, container 153, reel 8, images 31-61.

191 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 38. Willms' account appears to corroborate information contained in a letter which was published in Die Mennonitische Rundschau.

The letter reported numerous arrests of Mennonite kulaks in and near the village of Lichtfeld (Molotschna). The letter stated that on 4 May 1929, three Mennonite men were ordered to sell their possession and leave the village within five days (there were initially four men who were required to leave, but one was permitted to remain in the village). At the same time, approximately sixty families who were branded as kulaks were ordered to be banished from the region surrounding Lichtfeld. As a result of this order, some Mennonite families abandoned their farms and fled to other regions. "Auszug aus einem Brief aus Lichtfeld, Süd-Russland," MR, 26 June 1929, p. 12. In the colonies of Waterloo, Johanistal, and Spenor, seventy-two German farmers were arrested and incarcerated in late spring of 1929. The farmers were charged with violating various laws that included sabotaging the grain policy of the Soviet government. "Massenverhaftungen deutscher Kolonisten in der Sowjetukraine," MR, 3 July 1929, p. 12. Twenty-three men from the village of Nikolaipol were arrested one night in October of 1929. "Aus der alten Kolonie," MR, 23 April 1930, p. 8.

192 According to the CGWD, the following Mennonite villages did not see any of their inhabitants exiled in 1929: Alexanderfeld (Kronau), Alexanderkrone (Kronau), Altonau (Kronau), Blumenfeld (Nikopol), Felsenbach (Pjatichatki), Friedensfeld (Kronau), Gnadenfeld (Kronau), Gnadental (Schöndorf), Hochfeld (Kriwoj-Rog), Neu-Chortitza (Pjatichatki), Neudorf (Pjatichatki), Neu-Halbstadt (Kronau), Neu-Schönsee (Kronau), Nikolaifeld (Kronau), Reinfeld (Kronau), Rosenort (Kronau), Rotfeld (Pjatichatki), Schönau (Kronau), Schöndorf (Pjatichatki), Steinau (Nikopol), Steinfeld (Kronau), and Tiege (Kronau). See "Alexanderfeld (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 146, reel 1, images 43-82; "Alexanderkrone (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 154, reel 9, images 1-19; "Altonau (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 149, reel 4, images 264-301; "Blumenfeld (Nikopol)" in CGWD, container 152, reel 7, images 273-301; "Felsenbach (Pjatichatki)" in CGWD, container 150, reel 5, images 101-166; "Friedensfeld (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 154, reel 9, images 43-72; "Gnadenfeld (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 154, reel 9, images 20-42; "Gnadental (Safiewka)" in CGWD, container 147, reel 1, images 572-622; "Hochfeld (Kriwoj-Rog)" in CGWD, container 150, reel 5, images 352-383; "Neu-Chortitza (Pjatichatki)" in CGWD, container 150, reel 5, images 167-218; "Neu-Halbstadt (Kronau)" in CGWD; container 149, reel 4, images 231-263; "Neu-Schönsee (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 149, reel 4, images 448-476; "Nikolaifeld (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 149, reel 4, images 302-373; "Reinfeld (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 149, reel 4, images 374-400; "Rosenort (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 148, reel 2, images 487-527; "Rotfeld (Pjatichatki)" in CGWD, container 150, reel 5, images 219-249; "Schönau (Kronau)" in CGWD, container 154, reel 8,

images 539-596; "Steinau (Nikopol)" in *CGWD*, container 150, reel 4, images 680-721; "Steinfeld (Kronau)" in *CGWD*, container 154, reel 8, images 596-654; "Tiege (Kronau)" in *CGWD*, container 148, reel 3, images 103-140. For data concerning the number of people exiled from the villages of Neudorf (Pjatichatki) and Schöndorf (Pjatichatki), see the general report on the Pjatichatki region in *CGWD*, container 150, reel 5, images 1-39.

193 "Burwalde (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 189-237; "Kronstal (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 147, reel 2, images 83-111; Toews, "Documents on Mennonite Life in Russia 1930-1940: Part I -- Collectivization and the Great Terror," pp. 3ff, 11f. For the number of peasants who were exiled from Nikolaifeld (Chortitza) in 1929, see the report on the villages in the Chortitza *volost* in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 238ff.

194 "Chortitza (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 238ff; "Hochfeld (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 147, reel 1, images 640-673; "Einlage (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 152, reel 7, images, 107-193.

195 "Franzfeld (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 150, reel 4, images 477-516. For the number of persons who were banished from Nieder-Chortitza (Chortitza), see the comprehensive report on the villages in the Chortitza *volost* in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 238ff. See also "Neuendorf (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 150, reel 4, images 517-585; "Osterwick (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 152, reel 7, images 222-272; "Adelsheim (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 3-42; "Blumengart (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 159-188; "Kronsweide (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 147, reel 2, images 112-159; "Neuhorst (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 150; reel 4, images 586-604; "Neuenberg (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 147, reel 2, images 234-265; "Rosengart (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 148, reel 2, images 450-486; "Schöneberg (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 152, reel 7, images 194-221; "Schönhorst (Chortitza)" in *CGWD*, container 150, reel 4, images 605-640. For the number of people exiled from Rosenbach (Chortitza), see the comprehensive report on the villages in the Chortitza *volost* in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 238ff. In 1929, 153 people from the nineteen Mennonite villages in the Chortitza *volost* were exiled. See the comprehensive report on the Chortitza *volost* in *CGWD*, container 146, reel 1, images 238ff.

196 This explanation has been proposed by John B. Toews. See Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 153.

197 *Ibid*., pp. 153f.

198 "Adelsheim (Chortitza)" in CGWD, container 146, reel 1, images 3-42. See also Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 153. Close cooperation and village solidarity were the apparent reasons why local activists did not produce a list of Mennonite kulaks who were to be banished from the village of Schöneberg (Chortitza). "Entkulakisierung in Chortitza und in andern Dörfern," DB, 28 May 1930, p. 3.

199 "Rosengart (Chortitza)" in CGWD, container 148, images 450-486. See also Toews, Czars, Soviets, and Mennonites, p. 154.

200 The Mennonite flight to Moscow is discussed at greater length later in this chapter (see pp. 58ff). See also Mary Enns, Mia, The Story of a Remarkable Woman (Winnipeg: The Christian Press, n.d.), p. 58.

201 See Franz Thiessen, Neuendorf in Bild und Wort: Chortitzaer Bezirk, Ukraine 1789-1943 (Espelkamp; Franz Thiessen, 1984), pp. 203; Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 154.

202 See "Alexandrowka, Sagradowka, Den 27. Dez. 1929," DB, 12 February 1930, p. 4; Auhagen, Die Schicksalwende, pp. 79ff; Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 236.

203 See "Einem Bericht über die Lage in Süd-Russland entnehmen wir folgendes," DB, 4 July 1928, p. 3; "Die Kolonisten im Urteil der Ukrainer Kommunisten," DB, 25 July 1928, p. 3; Lohrenz, "Kollektivisierung," pp. 84ff; Karl Stumpp, "Die Deutschen in der Sowjetunion von 1917 bis 1965," in Leistung und Schicksal: Abhandlungen und Berichte über die Deutschen im Osten, ed. Eberhard G. Schulz (Köln: Böhlau, 1967), pp. 379f; Theodorowitsch, "Die Mennoniten in der UdSSR," p. 100.

204 Rempel, Einer von vielen, p. 73.

205 "Nachrichten aus der alten Heimat (Baratow)," DB, 11 July 1928, p. 3. One Mennonite reported that collectives were being organized in almost every village. Some people who still owned farm equipment were required to surrender their equipment to the nearest collective. "Unerfreuliches aus Russland," MR, 18 April 1928, p. 11. See also "Ein Schrei aus der Not," DB, 28 March 1928, p. 3.

206 There were reports of collectives and cooperatives being closed down in some regions. In Landskrone (Molotschna), a gigantic trade cooperative under the direction of the Mennonite Dietrich Janz went bankrupt. Because of a debt ranging between 8000 and 9000 rubles, it was decided that the merchandise of the cooperative was to be

sold. Each member of the cooperative was also required to donate 30 rubles to help offset the debt. "Landskrone, Molotschna," DB, 29 November 1928, p. 3.

207 See "Der neubegründete Molotschansker Rayon," DB, 3 January 1929, p. 3. In describing the differences between the commune (kommuna), artel, and toz, M. Lewin makes the following observations:

> The kommuna worked on egalitarian principles of distribution; families left their cottages and lived in rooms allocated to them in communal living quarters; everyone ate in a communal refectory; in principle, the children were brought up and educated by the kommuna....
>
> In the artel, collectivization did not extend to housing or consumption. Family life retained its private character, as it had before. Land was held in common, except for a small strip attached to the house.... In principle, all important implements, and draught animals, and occasionally either all or some of the cows, were communally owned....
>
> In the toz either all or part of the land was held in common ownership, and communally divided. In the majority of cases, income was distributed in accordance with the size of each peasant's holding. It was rare for livestock and the majority of the farm implements to be collectivized, but the heaviest and most expensive machines, such as tractors or steam threshers, which the individual farmer could not afford, were owned communally. In this type of association there was considerable variation in the degree of collectivization and the amount of property held in common.

Lewin, Russian Peasants and Soviet Power, pp. 110f. See also Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 108; Jasny, The Socialized Agriculture of the USSR, p. 49.

208 On January 3, 1929, the Canadian Mennonite newspaper, Der Bote, published a report dealing with the reorganization of the Molotschna raion. In the report there was data dealing with the size and population of the reorganized raion as well as data concerning the number of agricultural operations, the number of livestock, and the number of social service facilities (schools, hospitals) within the district. According to the report, the Molotschna raion consisted of 154 villages (105 were German-speaking and 49 were Ukrainian) with a total population of 48,872 people (71.01 percent of this population was German-

speaking). In dealing with the number of livestock in the region, the report stated that there were 3,985 horses under the age of three; there were 14,264 horses that were older than three years of age. There were also 14,490 head of cattle, 8,344 calves, 279 oxen, 7,540 sheep, and 6,503 pigs in the region. In dealing with the number of agricultural machinery and implements in the area, the report stated that there were 77 tractors, 3,332 plows, 864 threshing machines, 252 motors, and 2,933 mowers. There were 102 grade schools, 1 pedagogical college, 1 medical school, 2 agricultural schools, and 1 school for the deaf and dumb. The report also mentioned that there were two hospitals (with eighty beds), seven medical wards, and five veterinary clinics with five animal doctors and five animal surgeons. There were also two mechanized butter factories, one dry-milk factory, five brick factories, sixteen building and products mills, one brewery, one agricultural machinery factory, and some oil presses. "Der neubegründete Molotschansker Rayon," *DB*, 3 January 1929, p. 3. See also Huebert, *Hierschau*, pp. 302f.

209 "Der neubegründete Molotschansker Rayon," *DB*, 3 January 1929, p. 3; Huebert, *Hierschau*, p. 303.

210 "Reinfeld, den 20. Januar 1929," *MR*, 1 May 1929, p. 12. See also Susanna Toews, *Trek to Freedom: The Escape of Two Sisters from South Russia during World War II*, trans. Helen Megli (Winkler, Manitoba: Heritage Valley Publications, 1976), p. 15; Jacob A. Neufeld, *Tiefenwege: Erfahrungen und Erlebnisse von Russland -- Mennoniten in zwei Jahrzehnten bis 1949* (Virgil, Ontario: Niagara Press, 1954), p. 46; Rempel, "Erinnerungen eines Russland-Deutschen," p. 46; Loewen, *Jasykovo*, p. 56; Horst Klaassen, *Die Backnanger Mennoniten: Von Galizien, Preussen, und Russland nach Württemberg* (Backnang, West Germany: Mennonitengemeinde Backnang, 1976), p. 79; J. Janzen "Eine Schilderung aus dem Leben der Schwarzmeerdeutschen im Gebiet Molotschna (Ukraine)," 16 March 1944, Centre of Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, p. 79; Rempel, *Liebenau*, pp. 132, 147ff; Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, pp. 542ff. One Mennonite from the Chortitza *volost* wrote that numerous communes, collectives, and co-operatives were established in the area. Using various means of force and persuasion, local activists compelled many peasants to join these collectives and communes. "Auszug aus einem Briefe aus der Chortizer Wolost," *DB*, 23 October 1929, p. 4. See also "Die gegenwärtige Lage in Chortitza," *DB*, 14 March 1929, p. 3; "Aus einem Brief," *MR*, 8 May 1929, p. 12; "Bericht von der Molotschna," *DB*, 20 November 1929, p. 4.

211 "Aus einem Brief," *MR*, 8 May 1929, p. 12. One Mennonite from Molotschna reported that those who did not belong to a collective after March 1, 1929, were not able to obtain food and other items. "Molotschna, Kolonien, d. 18. März 1929," *MR*, 29 May 1929, p. 12.

212 "Die gegenwärtige Lage in Chortitza," DB, 14 March 1929, p. 3; "Ein Brief aus der Krim," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4.

213 See Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 110; "Ein Brief aus der Krim," DB, 3 April 1929, p. 4.

214 "Aus einem Brief," MR, 8 May 1929, p. 12; "Margenau (Molotschna) den 4. April 1929," DB, 15 May 1929, p. 3; Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, pp. 542ff.

215 See Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, pp. 135f; Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 239; Woelk, A Wilderness Journey, pp. 12ff; "Halbstadt Molotschna," DB, 25 January 1928, p. 3. See also Frau K., "Die Ansiedlung der Deutschen in dem Süd Kaukasas," American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Work Paper 10, (December, 1972), pp. 25ff.

216 See Abram Friesen and Abram J. Loewen, Die Flucht über den Amur (Rosthern, Saskatchewan: Echo-Verlag, 1946), p. 7; A. J. Kröker, "Der Amur: Ein mennonitisches Siedlungsgebiet," Mennonitische Warte, no. 28-30, 3 (Spring, 1937), pp. 103f; A. Ratzlaff, "Die Flucht über dem Amur nach China am 17-18, Dez. 1930," Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Walter Quiring, "Unser Weg zurück: Ein Flucht-Bericht aus Sowjetrussland," Mennonitische Volkswarte 2 (October, 1936), pp. 305-320; Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, pp. 135f; Yoder, For Conscience Sake, pp. 189f; Woelk, A Wilderness Journey, pp. 12f. See also Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten unter dem Bolschewismus in Ruszland gesagt haben," pp. 65f; Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 239; "Halbstadt Molotschna," DB, 25 January 1928, p. 3; "Aus der alten Kolonie -- Nikolaipol," DB, 23 May 1928, p. 3; "Amurgebiet, Russland," MR, 16 January 1929, p. 9; "Aus dem Amurgebiet," MR, 20 February 1929, p. 5; "Vom Amur," ZB, 3 July 1929, p. 9; "Aus der Amur-Ansiedlung," ZB, 31 July 1929, pp. 10f.

217 See Enns, Mia, pp. 67ff; "Das schreckliche Elend vor Moskau," MR, 18 December 1929, pp. 1ff.

218 Friesen and Loewen, Die Flucht über den Amur, pp. 13ff; Epp, Mennonite Exodus, pp. 239f; Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, pp. 138ff; "Das schreckliche Elend vor Moskau," MR, 18 December 1929, pp. 1ff; Reimer, Isaak W. Reimer Papers, pp. 1534-1543.

219 See also Unruh, Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, p. 57; "Aus Harbin China," ZB, 13 November 1929, p. 11.

220 See also Ehrt, Das Mennonitentum in Russland, pp. 158ff; B. H. Unruh's address in Bericht über die Mennonitische Welt-Hilfs-Konferenz, ed. Christian Neff

(Karlsruhe, West Germany: Heinrich Schneider, n.d.), pp. 83ff; Ipatow, Wer sind die Mennoniten?, pp. 82f; Lane, Christian Religion in the Soviet Union, p. 201.

221 Throughout the latter years of the New Economic Policy, the Soviet press continually attacked all Mennonite attempts to emigrate to the West. The newspapers often charged the Mennonites with betraying their fatherland. According to the Mennonite historian Frank Epp, the Soviet newspapers also accused the American bourgeois (through their letters to the relatives in the U.S.S.R.) of "propagandizing in the Soviet Union in order to get more people to come out to America in order to use them as slaves." Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 228. The press also took advantage of the stories of Mennonites who returned to the Soviet Union after emigrating to the West. For example, in an article entitled "Ein Enttaeuschter," the party newspaper Das Neue Dorf (March 11, 1928, no. 42) reported on the request of Abram Sawazki to return to the Soviet Union. According to the article, Sawazki was a Mennonite peasant from Chortitza who emigrated with his wife and children to Canada in June of 1927. The article also reported that Sawazki did not enjoy living in Canada, and that he considered his emigration to the West as "the most disastrous mistake of his life." See Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten unter dem Bolschewismus in Ruszland gesagt haben," p. 64. Some Mennonites who emigrated to Canada and then returned to the Soviet Union were later exiled to Siberia. See Enns, Mia, pp. 63ff.

It should also be noted that many Mennonites were first required to have a medical inspection by a Canadian physician before they could emigrate to Canada. In the early years of the New Economic Policy, Canadian physicians were permitted to travel across Ukraine and other regions of the U.S.S.R. in order to give these inspections. Dr. Drury, the chief medical inspector for the Canadian Pacific Railway, traveled approximately 25,000 miles across the Soviet Union to make such inspections in Mennonite communities. In the early months of 1926, however, the Soviet government stated that the medical services of Canadian physicians could only be administered in Moscow. This meant that Mennonites from regions as far away as Soviet Turkestan and Siberia were required to travel to Moscow to receive their medical inspections. When trade relations between Canada and the Soviet Union were broken off in 1928, Canadian medical inspectors were not permitted to continue their work in the Soviet Union. Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 228.

222 In his analysis of how Mennonites obtained their emigration passports, Frank Epp makes the following observations:

> The process of obtaining passports was a very long one. The prospective emigrant had to obtain a document from the village Soviet.

> Then he had to go to the regional soviet for his *spravki* (certificates), for which the signatures of three departments were needed. the finance department certified that all taxes were paid, the police department that the applicant was of good character, and the military authorities that the individual had been exempted or released from military service. Then he had to obtain the signature of the chairman of the regional soviet. Having obtained these the emigrant went to the foreign administration department of the *okrug* (a higher level soviet) which then issued or denied permission for a passport. In several *okrugs* passports were not issued, which meant going to another level. Frequently emigrants traveled 200 miles with horses and by train -- not only once, but several times -- to obtain their passports. Each passport was good for only three months, after which time it expired. A renewal required repetition of the whole process.
>
> There were other difficulties in the way. Very often one member of the family, usually the father, would be denied the passport, which in effect, meant denial of the whole family. Moreover, as soon as several families from one district applied, passports were denied all of them.

Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, pp. 227f. In some regions the demand for passports was astounding. One Mennonite reported that there were 27,000 applications for emigration passes in the Melitopol region alone. "Nachrichten von Schönwiese bei Alexandrowsk," *DB*, 17 April 1929, p. 3.

223 See Unruh, *Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, 1920-1933*, p. 50; "Sergejewka, Süd-Russland, den 5 März 1928," *MR*, 4 April 1928, p. 6; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 2 May 1928, p. 11; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 2 May 1928, p. 14; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland, Südrussl. den 15. August 1928," *MR*, 12 September 1928, p. 8; "Barwenkowo, Russland," *MR*, 20 March 1929, p. 5; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 228; "St. Martin, Man., den 30. Apr. 1929. (Liebe Geschwister)," *MR*, 22 May 1929, p. 12.

224 For minimum age requirements for visas, see Auhagen, *Die Schicksalwende*, p. 54; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 228. A Mennonite from Fürstenwerder (Molotschna) wrote that the total price for emigration passes for his family amounted to one thousand rubles. "Fürstenwerder, den 24. Febr. 1929," *MR*, 1 May 1929, p. 12.

225 "Aus einem Brief von Russland," *MR*, 11 April 1928, p. 11; "Sergejewka, Fürstenland," *MR*, 23 May 1928, p. 11; "Molotschna, Kolonien," d. 18. März 1929," *MR*, 29 May 1929, p. 12; "Pawlowka, Russland," *MR*, 3 July 1929, p. 12; "Osterwick, Süd-Russland," *MR*, 21 August 1929, p. 12; "Eine Bitte!," *MR*, 6 November 1929, p. 12; "Steinau Russland," *MR*, 13 March 1929, p. 9.

226 Between April of 1927 and April of 1928, 723 Mennonites emigrated to the West. Between April of 1928 and April of 1929, 507 Mennonites emigrated. See Tables E and F in Appendix A. See also "St. Martin, Man. den 30. April, 1929 (Liebe Geschwister)," *MR*, 22 May 1929, p. 12.

227 Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 15ff. See also Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, pp. 130f.

228 According to H. J. Willms, approximately twenty-nine families left Moscow on August 10, 1929. Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 15ff. According to B. H. Unruh (an important Mennonite leader in Germany who worked on behalf of the Soviet Mennonites) and Otto Auhagen (German agricultural ambassador in Moscow), approximately sixty families left the Soviet Union in the summer of 1929. Unfortunately, neither Unruh or Auhagen specify whether or not these sixty families included the twenty-nine Siberian Mennonite families which also emigrated that year. See B. H. Unruh, "Bericht über die katastrophal Lage der mennontischen Ansiedlungen in Russland und die Massenflucht der Kolonisten," 29 October 1929, p. 1; Auhagen, *Die Schicksalwende*, p. 54. See also "Wie wird es endlich mit unsern Russländern werden?," *MR*, 30 October 1929, p. 11.

229 See Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 16. In a letter (October 3, 1929) from Tarasowka, it was reported that Mennonites from all regions of the U.S.S.R. (Crimea, Samara, Orenburg, Memrik, Siberia, and the Don region) were coming to Moscow with the hope of emigrating to the West. "Tarasowka bei Moscow," *MR*, 13 November 1929, p. 11. See also Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 131; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 126; J. Remple, *Der Sowjethölle entronnen: Einige Erlebnisse eines jungen Christen im heutigen Russland* (Kassel, Germany: J. G. Onden Nacht, n.d.), pp. 14ff; Görz, *Die Molotschnaer Ansiedlung*, p. 203; Klaassen, *Die Backnanger Mennoniten*, pp. 78f; Harder, *Alexandertal*, p. 87; Görz, *Die mennonitische Siedlungen der Krim*, p. 67; Abram Kroeker, *My Flight from Russia: Experiences under Soviet Rule* (Scottdale, Pennsylvania: Mennonite Publishing House, 1932), p. 15.

230 See Unruh, "Bericht über die katastrophal Lage der mennontische Ansiedlungen in Russland und die Massenflucht der kolonisten," 29 October 1929, p. 1. Some people were so anxious to get to Moscow that they were willing to sell all of their property at very low prices. They abandoned

whatever possessions they were unable to sell. Some people also abandoned their homes and livestock. "Russland, den 1. Dez. 1929," MR, 1 January 1930, p. 6. See also "Eine Bitte!," MR, 6 November 1929, p. 12; "Bericht von Neu-Samara. Den 29. Sept. 1929," DB, 13 November 1929, p. 4; "Deutsche Kolonisten fliehen aus Sibirien," MR, 13 November 1929, p. 11; Rempel, Liebenau, p. 47. In a letter (November 13, 1929) from Sagradowka (Kronau), a Mennonite reported that many Mennonites had quickly sold or abandoned their property in their attempt to move to Moscow. In one village alone there were thirty families which left for the capital city. "Sagradowka, Süd-Russland, den 13 November 1929," MR, 11 December 1929, p. 6. Mennonites in some villages such as Steinfeld already moved to Moscow in early November. Within a short period of time, the population of some villages had dropped by seventy percent. "Bericht aus Moscow," DB, 18 December 1929, p. 4.

231 These figures are based on a series of letters and reports written by B. H. Unruh. See B. H. Unruh, "Die unter den deutschen Kolonisten Russlands, besonders unter den Mennoniten, ausgebrochene Auswanderungspanik," 10 October 1929, p. 1; Unruh, "Bericht über die katastrophal Lage der mennonitische Ansiedlungen in Russland und die Massenflucht der kolonisten," 29 October 1929, p. 1. See also Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 131; Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 231; "Wie wird es endlich mit unsern Russländern werden?," MR, 30 October 1929, p. 11; "Bericht von Neu-Samara, Den 29 Sept. 1929," DB, 13 November 1929, p. 4; "Toronto, Ont., 34 Alvin St.," MR, 20 November 1929, p. 12. According to one report, there were 875 Mennonite families, 150 Lutheran families, and 60 Catholic families waiting for emigration visas in Moscow in mid-October. "Bericht von Moscow. Mitte Oktober 1929," DB, 4 December 1929, p. 4.

232 In mid-October, students and other men representing the Soviet government tried to convince the Mennonite refugees to give up on their endeavors to obtain passports. In describing the efforts of these Soviet agents, H. J. Willms made the following observations:

> The Soviet government wanted to let us know that it would give no further passports to anybody. They had come simply to advise us to stop wasting useless time and money and to return to our previous occupations. This was to be the last word of the government concerning the matter.

Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 52. See Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 236; Toews, Czar, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 131. A Mennonite from Sagradowka (Kronau) wrote that many people who were fleeing to Moscow were stopped at the train stations and denied any of the necessary traveling passes. The

Mennonite also noted that some of the homes of those peasants who managed to leave for Moscow were dismantled by the local police. "Sagradowka," *DB*, 22 January 1930, p. 4. "Bericht von Zentral, Gouv. Woronesh. Den 22 November 1929," *DB*, 1 January 1930, p. 4. In Ohrloff (Molotschna) government officials were making it very difficult for people to travel to Moscow. The officials arrested some Mennonites and prohibited the sale of property in many regions. Some Mennonites who had already left by train for Moscow were later sent back to their home villages. "Bericht von Ohrloff, Molotschna (Auszug aus einem Privatbriefe vom 18. November 1929)," *DB*, 1 January 1930, p. 4. Mennonite peasants in the some villages were forced to sign statements which promised that they would not leave their villages. Some of the statements also blamed the clergy and the kulaks for initiating the people's desire to emigrate. "Russland, den 1 Dez. 1929," *MR*, 1 January 1930, p. 6.

233 See Unruh, "Die unter den deutschen Kolonisten Russlands, besonders unter den Mennoniten, ausgebrochene Auswanderungspanik," 10 October 1929, p. 1; Unruh, "Bericht über die katastrophal Lage der mennonitische Ansiedlungen in Russland und die Massenflucht der Kolonisten," 29 October 1929, p. 1; B. H. Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, p. 11. See also Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, pp. 131f; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 236; "Bericht aus Halbstadt, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4; "Bericht aus Moskau," *DB*, 18 December 1929, p. 4; "Deutsche Bauernot in Sowjetrussland," *DB*, 18 December 1929, p. 4. According to one report from the Crimea, there were nearly thirteen thousand Mennonites as well as thousands of ethnic German Lutherans and Catholics who were living in Moscow in mid-November. "Aus der Krim, den 14. Dez. 29," *DB*, 29 January 1930, p. 4.

234 One Mennonite wrote that ten refugees were sharing a room without any furniture in a home in Moscow. "Bericht aus Moscow," *DB*, 18 December 1929, p. 4; "Zerstörte Hoffnungen," *MR*, 29 January 1930, pp. 12f. Another Mennonite refugee in Moskau reported that twenty-four people were forced to share two small rooms. The rent for one small apartment was about forty-five rubles. "Toronto, Ont., 34 Alvin St.," *MR*, 27 November 1929, p. 12. Another Mennonite noted that the inhabitants of Moscow were selling their houses by the room to the Mennonite refugees. At one Russian home, a room sold for twenty-five rubles. "Wie wird es endlich mit unsern Russländern werden?," *MR*, 30 October 1929, p. 11; "Deutsche Kolonisten fliehen aus Sibierien," *MR*, 13 November 1929, p. 11. One Mennonite wrote that a large number of families had constructed temporary shanties along the north side of the major railroad lines in Moscow. In many of these shanties, ten or more people shared a room. "Moscow," *MR*, 18 December 1929, p. 11. In some cases, the rent for one summer villa

(which could house six families) in Moscow was as high as 150 rubles per month. Johann Riediger and Susanne Hamm, Wie Gott fuehrt: Oder aus dem Steppenvolk ein Bergvoelklein (n.p., n.d.), p. 21.

235 According to one report, a kilogram of barely bread sold for 11.5 rubles, a kilogram of plain bread was 14 rubles, and a kilogram of wheat bread cost 32 rubles. If a person wanted to purchase meat, he was required to buy a book of cards which permitted him to purchase meat on specific days of the week. "Toronto, Ont., 34 Alvin St.," MR, 27 November 1929, pp. 12f.

236 Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten unter dem Bolschewismus in Ruszland gesagt haben," p. 131.

237 See Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, p. 3; "Die ersten Flüchtlinge in Kiel," MR, 4 December 1929, p. 2; "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4.

238 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 58.

239 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 61. According to H. Martins (the leader of the Kiel group), the meetings with Kalinin took place on October 24, 1929. "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 29, 1930, p. 4. See also "Flucht aus der Hölle. Die deutschen Russland-Bauern wandern," MR, 11 December 1929, pp. 4f; Toews, Czars, Soviets and Mennonites, p. 131.

240 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 62.

241 The petitions were mailed on October 25. Already by October 28, government officials had told the Mennonites that they were to be leaving the country before or on October 29. The refugees, however, did not being their journey to the West until October 30. "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 58, 66.

242 "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 66. According to H. J. Willms, the train carrying the Mennonite refugees also carried military personal. Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 66.

243 "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929,"

DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4; "Die ersten Flüchtlinge in Kiel," *MR*, 4 December 1929, p. 2; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 68f.

244 See Unruh, "Bericht über die katastrophal Lage der mennonitische Ansiedlungen in Russland und die Massenflucht der Kolonisten," 29 October 1929, pp. 2ff; Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, pp. 1ff; Unruh, *Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, 1920-1933*, pp. 23f; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 132; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 131ff.

245 Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 231. The Swedish government also worked on behalf of Swedish-speaking, Soviet peasants who were also trying to emigrate to the West. "Wie wird es endlich mit unsern Russländern werden?," *MR*, 30 October 1929, p. 11.

246 Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, pp. 1f; Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, pp. 54ff; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 132; "Benjamin H. Unruh: Zum Gedenken," *Der Mennonit*, (June, 1959), pp. 78f.

247 Frank Epp makes the following observations concerning the diplomatic efforts on behalf of the refugees:

> On October 27, a wire from the German embassy in Moscow reported that the first transport of refugee emigrants was to begin on October 28 on the basis of prepared lists and without payment of the usual passport fees. In Hamburg these lists should then be replaced by personal German passports with guarantees for the return of any of the emigrants to Germany in the event of deportation from Canada. A request had gone out to Canada to consider receiving the refugees on compassionate grounds. The Soviets were ready to ship 800-1,000 of the refugees via Leningrad to Hamburg and another 5,000 from Riga. Germany wanted the CPR [Canadian Pacific Railway] to take over at Leningrad or the Latvian border.

Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, pp. 232f. See also Unruh, *Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, 1920-1933*, p. 24; "Bericht aus Halbstadt, Südrussland," *DB*, 27 November 1929, p. 4.

248 See Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, pp. 2ff; "Letter from C. F. Klassen to B. H. Unruh, 25

February 1930," pp. 1f; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 132; "Nicht erwünscht," *MR*, 5 February 1930, pp. 2ff.

249 See Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, pp. 2f; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 233. When the Kiel refugees arrived in Germany, there was much speculation in the West about the actual number of Mennonite refugees who were supposedly in the process of emigrating to the West. In November of 1929, an article appeared in the *Winnipeg Free Press* which reported that three thousand Soviet German farmers (many of Mennonite descent) had received passes to leave the Soviet Union. The article also reported that those receiving the passes were first required to pay their taxes and surrender their money to Soviet banks before they would be allowed to emigrate. The article stated that there were still seven thousand Soviet Germans (five to six thousand Mennonites and one thousand Lutherans and Catholics) that hoped to leave the Soviet Union. According to the article, the Soviet government was processing approximately one hundred passes per day. The article also noted that citizens of Moscow were also protesting against the government on behalf of the Mennonite refugees. "Mennoniten erhalten Pässe, um nach Kanada auszuwandern," *MR*, 13 November 1929, p. 6.

250 See Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, p. 4; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 133.

251 Unruh, *Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk*, pp. 27f; B. H. Unruh, "Abschrift, Berlin, W.10 d. January 1930," p. 1. See also Toews, *Czars Soviets and Mennonites*, pp. 133f; B. H. Unruh, "Erklärung, Karlsruhe, den 31. Juli 1931," B. B. Janz Collection, pp. 1ff; Hildebrandt, "Die Mennoniten in Russland," pp. 197f; Yoder, *For Conscience Sake*, pp. 165ff; "Die Auswanderer aus Russland. Ein dringender Appell an deutsche Hilfsbereitschaft," *MR*, 11 December 1929, p. 4; "Deutschlands Appell zur Hilfe für die Deutschrussen," *MR*, 11 December 1929, p. 5; "Aufruf deutscher Verbände," *MR*, 11 December 1929, p. 6. Frank Epp states that the organization *Brüder in Not* coordinated the activities of seven welfare agencies, including Catholic, Protestant and Jewish agencies. Epp also notes that the organization's appeal for assistance for the Moscow refugees was "based on national and racial kinship sentiment as can be seen from the slogan, '*Das Schicksal eines Deutschen geht einen jeden Deutschen an*' (The fate of a German is the concern of every German)." Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, pp. 233-236.

252 Unruh, "Bericht III: zur Massenflucht der deutsch-russischen Bauern (vom 24.X. -- 23.XI)," 23 November 1929, p. 6; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 139; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, pp. 233f; "Für den Auschuss 'Brüder in Not,'" *Chrisliche Gemeinde Kalender für das Jahr 1931*, ed. Abraham

Hirschler (Kaiserlautern, Germany: Konferenz der Süddeutschen Mennoniten, 1931), p. 111; "Wanderungen," *MR*, 4 December 1929, pp. 2f; "Deutschlands Appell zur Hilfe für die Deutschrussen," *MR*, 11 December 1929, p. 5; Unruh, *In the Name of Christ*, p. 24. According to one report, the German Reich President, Paul von Hindenburg, donated 200,000 *Reichsmark* to the cause of the Soviet refugees. Unruh, *Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, 1920-1933*, p. 28; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 139; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 236. According to *Die Mennonitische Rundschau*, President Hindenburg donated 250,000 *Reichsmark* to help support the emigration of Soviet-German refugees. "Hindenburg gibt 250,000 Mark," *MR*, 4 December 1929, pp. 2f.

253 Toews, *Czars Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 133; "Hindenburg gibt 250,000 Mark," *MR*, 4 December 1929, pp. 2f. One Mennonite noted that some of the latecomers to Moscow were sent back to their homes in mid-November. "Bericht aus Moskau," *DB*, 18 December 1929, p. 4. In a memo dated November 16, 1929, Otto Auhagen (the German agricultural attache in Moscow) reported that there were 9,120 Mennonites, 2,481 Lutherans, 95 Baptists and Evangelicals, and 743 Catholics refugees in Moscow. The total number of refugees was 12,439. Unfortunately, Auhagen does not specify when this census was taken, and if the census took into account the refugees who were already sent home or exiled. Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, p. 76.

254 Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 139f. On November 25, 1929, the Council of People's Commissars decided to allow the remaining refugees in Moscow to emigrate to the West. *Ibid*.

255 Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, p. 81; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 133; "Vor Moskaus Toren," *MR*, 25 December 1929, p. 13. One Mennonite man in Moscow who was not permitted to leave with other refugees was Heinz Unruh. In late November, Unruh and other Mennonites worked unceasingly on behalf of the refugees who were still in Moscow. He negotiated with both Soviet officials and the German consul in Moscow. When the Soviet government decided in late November to let the remaining refugees emigrate to Germany, the government refused to grant Unruh and his family the necessary emigration visas. Unruh was later arrested, loaded with his family into a cattle car, and transported to an exile settlement. It is not known how or when Unruh died in exile. Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 157f.

256 See Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten unter dem Bolschewismus in Ruszland gesagt haben," p. 62; Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland*, p. 159; Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 133. In a letter from Crimea it was reported that the evacuation of the refugees to Germany was to begin on November 27. "Aus der Krim, den 14. Dez.

29.," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4. See also "Bericht aus Moskau," DB, 18 December 1929, p. 4; "Deutsche Bauernot in Sowjet-Russland," DB, 18 December 1929, p. 4; "Wanderungen," MR, 8 January 1930, pp. 2f; "Wanderungen," MR, 15 January 1930, pp. 2f; "Wanderungen," MR, 15 January 1930, p. 7; "Wanderungen," MR, 29 January 1930, p. 6; "Die Massenflucht der deutschen Bauern aus der Sowjet-Union, und deren politische Hintergründe. Von Prof. B. H. Unruh.," MR, 29 January 1930, pp. 1ff; "Die Massenflucht der deutschen Bauern aus der Sowjet-Union, und deren politische Hintergründe. Von Prof. B. H. Unruh.," MR, 26 February 1930, pp. 1ff; "Die Massenflucht deutsch-russischer Bauern aus der Sowjetunion u. deren politisiche Hintergründe," DB, 5 March 1930, p. 1; "Personenliste der Flüchtlinge im Lager Prenzlau," DB, 5 March 1930, p. 5. According to Sigfried Kraft, there were eleven trains that transported refugees out of the Soviet Union between December 3 and December 12, 1929. On these eleven trains, there were 3,885 Mennonites, 1,260 Lutherans, 468 Catholics, 51 Baptists, and 7 Adventists. There was a total of 5,671 refugees. Sigfried Kraft, "Die Russlanddeutsche Flüchtlinge des Jahres 1929-1930 und ihre Aufnahme im Deutschen Reich" (Ph.D. dissertation, Martin Luther Universität, 1939), p. 58. The sudden decision to allow nearly all of the remaining refugees in Moscow to emigrate to the West resulted in many families being torn apart. On November 11, 1929, the Chortitza minister, Johann Töws, was arrested in Moscow, incarcerated for a month, and later exiled. He eventually died in exile in 1933. The other members of his family, however, were able to emigrate to Germany in late November. They eventually moved to Brazil. See "Trotz Verbannung und Tod!," MR, 14 June 1933, pp. 2ff; Töws, Mennonitische Märtyrer, 1:48; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 116f, 152. For accounts of the various Mennonite groups, such as the Swinemünde group, that succeeded in emigrating to the West in 1929, see Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 56ff. It should be noted that there were various government-set prices rates for passports in the months between September and November of 1929. According to a memo (dated October 11, 1929) written by Otto Auhagen, there was initially a four-tiered set of passport rates. Kulaks were required to pay 330 rubles for a pass, middle farmers were charged either 220 or 110 rubles for a pass, poor farmers had to pay 50 rubles, and members of a workers' association were required to pay 5 rubles for a pass. On November 27, 1929, Auhagen reported that the general price for an adult pass was set at 220 rubles for those refugees who were leaving for Germany in late November and early December. Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, pp. 54, 80. See also Unruh, Fügung und Führung im Mennonitischen Welthilfswerk, 1920-1933, pp. 18f; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 49; "Aus der Krim, den 14. Dez. 29," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4.

257 See Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 79.

258 *Ibid*. See also "Zerstörte Hoffnungen," *MR*, 29 January 1930, pp. 12f; "Moskau," *MR*, 18 December 1929, p. 11; "Warum die Leute auswandern wollen," *MR*, 18 December 1929, pp. 12f; "Deutsche Bauernot in Sowjetrussland," *MR*, 25 December 1929, p. 2; "Zurück geschickt nach Sibirien," 25 December 1929, p. 3; "Aus einem Brief," *MR*, 1 January 1930, pp. 12f; "Bericht von Ohrloff, Molotschna," *DB*, 1 January 1930, p. 4.

259 See Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, p. 79; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 142; Yoder, *For Conscience Sake*, pp. 165ff. See also Klaassen, *Die Backnanger Mennoniten*, p. 79; Riediger and Hamm, *Wie Gott fuehrt*, p. 22.

260 See Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, pp. 79f; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 145; "Rücktransport in Viehwagen," *MR*, 4 December 1929, p. 6.

261 Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 143.

262 Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 236; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 143. See also "Zurück geschickt nach Sibirien," *MR*, 25 December 1929, p. 3.

263 Remple, "Erinnerungen eines Russland-Deutschen," pp. 50ff; Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 236. According to one report, Moscow police put a number of Mennonite men into small rooms with very hot ovens in order to force the men to "voluntarily" return to their home villages. Many of the men who were put in these rooms quickly suffered from heat stroke and other related ailments. "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," *DB*, 29 January 1930, p. 4. Other Mennonite men were put into ice-cold rooms where they were kept until they willing to comply with the officials' demands. "Schrecklich," *MR*, 1 January 1930, p. 6.

264 Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 142, 145, 150.

265 Auhagen, *Die Schicksalswende*, p. 79. It is difficult to determine how many Mennonites were imprisoned or exiled. According to Frank Epp, there were more than 300 men who went to "prison exile." Epp, *Mennonite Exodus*, p. 236. Some of these men were sent to work camps near the Solovets Islands and Vologda, and in various regions in the Ural mountains. See "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," *DB*, 29 January 1930, p. 4; "Zurück geschickt nach Sibirien," *MR*, 25 December 1929, p. 13; "Mitteilungen aus Russland," *MR*, 25 December 1929, p. 13; Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 155f.

266 Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 79; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 142, 150f. An eyewitness in Moscow stated that initially the refugees were seldom disturbed by government officials. Only in late November did the mass arrests begin to occur. Government officials told the refugees that Canada would not accept them as emigrants. Many of the refugees, however, refused to believe the officials. According to one eyewitness, "many of these people had left everything behind and brought very little food provisions with them. Now many refugees were being forced to leave Moscow, but where were they going to be transported?" For many peasants, their worst fear was to be forced to join a commune and thus required to renounce their religious beliefs. "Ins Elend zurück," DB, 25 December 1929, p. 4. A Mennonite reported that many Mennonite refugees waiting in Moscow became very fearful a week before November 25, 1929. There were numerous arrests of Mennonite men who were imprisoned in Moscow jails. The families of these men were subsequently loaded onto wagons, and brought to the Pushkino, Mytishchi, Kosino ("Bossino" in the original), and Ostrowkaja railway stations. At these stations, the people were loaded into livestock cars at gun-point. Some of the refugees were sent to exile camps in Siberia while others were transported to their homes in the Crimea. "Das schreckliche Elend vor Moscow," MR, 18 December 1929, pp. 1ff. See also "Ins Elend zurück," DB, 25 December 1929, p. 4; C. A. Flügge, Notschreie aus Russland: Sechzig Briefe von Augenzeugen mit Einführung und erklärende Anmerkungen (Kassel: J. G. Oncken, 1930), p. 62.

267 Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 79; "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4; "Das schreckliche Elend vor Moscow," MR, 18 December 1929, pp. 1ff; "Ins Elend zurück," DB, 25 December 1929, p. 4.

268 Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 79.

269 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 143.

270 See "Mitteilungen aus Russland," MR, 25 December 1929, p. 3; "Ins Elend zurück," DB, 25 December 1929, p. 4. In a letter dated December 5, 1929, a Mennonite wrote that the Moscow jails were overcrowded with Mennonite refugees. He also noted that the soldiers often went into the apartments of the refugees, loaded the families into automobiles, and took them to the train station. The women and children were often separated from their husbands and fathers, and subsequently loaded onto the "red wagons" of the trains. Some of the peasants who resisted the officials were killed. There were usually about forty-two people in each of the "red wagons." "Minlertschik, den 5 Dez. 1929," MR, 29 January 1930, p. 13. See also "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H.

Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4. Some Soviet officials apparently gave food rations to each of the refugees in the freight cars. These rations usually consisted of a piece of bread (300 grams) and a piece of sausage (100 grams). Later, the practice of providing the refugees with food provisions was discontinued. Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 80. Eight trains (with as many as twenty cattle cars apiece) were utilized for the purpose of returning the refugees. Four of these trains were sent to Ukraine and the Crimea; the other four trains were sent to Siberia. See Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 142; Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 80. In describing the transportation of the refugees, H. J. Willms made the following observations:

> Any observer glancing at the outside walls of the freight cars saw the signs written in huge letters, "RESETTLERS." He would also notice that no one traveling in these cars would engage in any audible conversation, for it was strictly forbidden to do so. Thus the Russian people knew nothing of the tragedy which was staged by the Soviet regime.

Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 142.

271 "Letter from Heinrich Martens, refugee in Mölln camp, to Friend Klassen, 29 December 1929," as cited in Epp, Mennonite Exodus, p. 236. According to a report written by Otto Auhagen, the percentage of Mennonites who were shipped to exile settlements or to their former homes in Ukraine and the Crimea was much higher than the percentages of people belonging to other religious denominations who were also exiled or sent back to their homes. Auhagen noted that of the 2,471 Lutherans, Baptists, and Evangelicals (of which 118 were Baptists and Evangelicals) who were in Moscow before the implementation of the forced Soviet deportation measures, about 1,800 people were permitted to stay in Moscow and eventually emigrate in late November. Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 81.

272 Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 145ff. See also "Um des Glaubens Willen," DB, 12 March 1930, p. 4; "Riga," MR, 26 March 1930, p. 11.

273 See "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929," DB, 29 January 1930, p. 4; "Erfahrungen einer Familie," MR, 29 January 1930, p. 7; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, p. 143; Auhagen, Die Schicksalswende, p. 80.

274 See "Alexandrowka, Sagradowka. Den 27. Dez. 1929," *DB*, 12 February 1930, p. 4. See also "Auszug aus einem Briefe des H. Martins, des Führers der Gruppe, die in Kiel landete. Mölln, den 29 Dez. 1929.," *DB*, 29 January 1930, p. 4; "Das schreckliche Elend vor Moscow," *MR*, 18 December 1929, pp. 1ff; "Ins Elend zurück," *DB*, 25 December 1929, p. 4; "Ins Elend zurück," *MR*, 1 January 1930, p. 3. Not all of the refugees who were transported back to their home villages remained at home for very long. Some of the refugees immediately returned to Moscow. A number of Mennonites who returned to Moscow in late November were able to emigrate with the last group of refugees that received exit visas. This was the experience of J. Siemans, a Mennonite from the village of Guszarovka. In relating Siemans' story, H. J. Willms provides the following account:

> Following his arrest and forced return trip, he at once set out, upon his arrival, to secure for himself enough food supplies, whereupon he immediately took off for Moscow again. However, when he arrived in Charkov, the capital of the Ukraine, he was caught by the G.P.U. for the second time and again sent back to Guszarovka. But once again he was successful in making his way through to the city of Charkov. Here he tried to proceed to Moscow by plane, but all air transportation had been stopped for the winter just two days before his arrival. This obstacle did not kill his courage, however, and he next took a train detour to the south after surmounting every serious difficulty in his way, finally reached Moscow via the city of Voroneszh. Immediately following his arrival in Moscow he managed to join a transport group which had just started on its way to the border. He thereby successfully escaped to Germany.

Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 144.

275 Some Mennonites from Sagradowka (Kronau) wrote that their homes had been ransacked and left in a shambles when they returned from Moscow. Much of their furniture and bedding had been stolen while they were away. Some of their Ukrainian neighbors, however, graciously provided the distraught refugees with many household necessities. "Zerstörte Hoffnungen," *MR*, 29 January 1930, pp. 12f. See also Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, p. 147; Remple, "Erinnerungen eines Russland-Deutschen," pp. 50ff.

276 "Fürstenwerder, den 15. Dez. 29," *DB*, 22 January 1930, p. 4. See also Willms, *At the Gates of Moscow*, pp. 145ff, 151ff.

277 Görz, Memrik, p. 69; "Traurige Nachricht von Russland," MR, 16 April 1930, pp. 8f; "Alexandrowka, Sagradowka, Den 27. Dez. 1929," DB, 12 February 1930, p. 4; Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 145ff, 151ff. H. J. Willms notes that some Mennonites who had not traveled to Moscow were also harassed and arrested. In describing the treatment of some of these Mennonites, Willms made the following observations:

> By this time even the Mennonites who had never left home at all were also being adversely affected by the tragic turn of events. Arrest might come if one had merely mentioned the word "emigration." Those who had gone to Moscow only as scouts were thrown into prison. Even the schools were now used in the struggle against emigration. The conversations of the school children were listened to carefully and attempts were also made to turn the children against their parents. The situation became so unbearable that attempts by Mennonites to escape in any direction were renewed, since in their villages they had no protection against the ruthless measures of revenge on the part of the Red Commissars.

Willms, At the Gates of Moscow, pp. 145f.

278 Conquest, The Harvest of Sorrow, p. 115.

Chapter III

* * * * *

Conclusion and Epilogue

What followed the events recounted above was Stalin's "revolution from above" -- a revolution where large segments of the population were imprisoned, exiled, or executed, and where the majority of the peasant population was forcibly transferred to state and collective farms. As the major components of this "revolution," the Soviet regime's dekulakization and collectivization campaigns initiated a period of dislocation, chaos, and terror that had profound economic, political, social, religious, and cultural repercussions on the Mennonite population. With respect to the economic repercussions on the community, the dekulakization and collectivization campaigns left many Mennonite peasants destitute and bankrupt even before famine conditions began to appear in the spring and summer of 1932. Extortionist grain expropriation campaigns, outrageous taxes, widespread confiscation of land and property, forced collectivization, and the ravages of the famine had depleted nearly all of the available wealth that the Mennonites still possessed in the final years of the New Economic Policy. Without possessions, money, or food, many Mennonites were forced to lead subhuman lives on collective and state farms in Ukraine and the Crimea, and in prisons and exile settlements scattered across the U.S.S.R. A significant number of these Mennonites were forced to perform slave labor and live on parsimonious rations until fatal illness, hunger, or execution released them from their misery. That many more Mennonites did not suffer destitution and death was due only to the relief efforts of thousands of European and North American Mennonites on behalf of their relatives and friends in the Soviet Union.

Within the sphere of politics, the Mennonites lost the power to determine their political fate when the regime began to take decisive steps in 1928 to gain complete control over the administrative and political affairs of villages, collectives, and state farms. These steps -- which included new rules and regulations concerning the village commune meetings, an increase in the power of the village soviets and troikas, the installation of party faithful in the administrative posts of the collective and state farms, and the disenfranchisement, incarceration, exile, and execution of Mennonite political and religious leaders -- extinguished the traditional, semi-democratic political system that existed in the Mennonite settlements by replacing Mennonite leaders with party puppets manipulated by Stalin's officials. This decapitation of the Mennonite political leadership meant that the community no longer had a united voice with which to express its political concerns to officials in various levels of government. Denied the most basic of political freedoms, the Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea were now required to follow the arbitrary orders of village and collective officials whose political mandate was not to fulfill the wishes of the peasantry, but to carry out the often nefarious and arbitrary orders of Stalin and his underlings.

The government takeover of Mennonite schools and other social institutions, and the expulsion of Mennonite teachers who refused to toe the party line and to teach anti-religious propaganda also destroyed many of the social components which had previously helped to maintain the cohesiveness of the Mennonite community. In the past, Mennonite schools had proven to be one of the most effective means of promoting and maintaining Mennonite religious traditions, identity, and culture within the various colonies and settlements. Between 1928 and 1933, however, the role of Mennonite schools changed dramatically as school teachers were now required to inculcate the regime's ideals and anti-religious views into the minds of Mennonite children. In this new environment, Mennonite children and teachers were forced to renounce the cherished traditions and beliefs of their families and ancestors, report the names of those who were still espousing such beliefs and traditions, expose the identity of those who happened to fit into the government's open-ended definition of "kulak," and participate in government-sponsored activities and groups (Pioneers or Komsomol). Although large numbers of Mennonite children and teachers resisted this assault in the schools, there were also a significant number of Mennonites who, under the threat of fines, imprisonment, or exile, gave in to the pressure and complied with the painful demands imposed upon them.

The government's measures to do away with religious leaders and to eradicate religious and cultural institutions in the Mennonite community also severed many of the ties that had once bound the community together. The internment, exile, and execution of large numbers of Mennonite clergymen, the conversion of Mennonite churches into clubs, theaters, barns, and buildings for other purposes, and the attempts to stop the Mennonite observance of special religious services such as Christmas and Easter severely threatened the continued existence of a religious and cultural awareness among the Mennonites. With their religious and ethnic identity now in jeopardy, and with many of their religious leaders and churches gone, a significant number of Mennonite laymen (including the women and the elderly) took it upon themselves to preserve and pass on their religious faith by holding secret services in their homes and in other places where they would not be harassed. Such efforts to preserve the faith were often successful, but they in no way decreased the ever-present danger of Soviet ideology and atheistic creeds eventually supplanting Mennonite faith and beliefs in the minds and hearts of future generations of Soviet Mennonites.

Even more dangerous to the Mennonite sense of identity than the government attacks on religious institutions were the new pressures on the Mennonite family. Traditionally an important promoter of Mennonite faith and culture, the average Mennonite family suffered severe hardships between

1928 and 1933. During these years, many families were split apart when various members were either incarcerated or exiled, or subject to death from illness, starvation, or execution. Moreover, the transfer of large numbers of Mennonite families from privately owned farms to state-controlled collectives and state farms marked the end of the economic independence of the Mennonite family in Ukraine and the Crimea.[1] It was the state and not the family unit that now determined where and how the family's members were to live, where they were to work, what they were allowed to earn, how their expropriated land, livestock, and property was to be used, and in what political, religious, and cultural activities they were allowed to participate. Having been forced to surrender much of its control over its economic destiny to the state, the Mennonite family was now vulnerable to the arbitrary decisions of the state in virtually all economic matters. Thus, when the Soviet regime created artificial famine conditions in certain regions of Ukraine and the Crimea in 1932-1933, there was very little that the average collectivized peasant family could do to counter the effects of the famine. As was mentioned above, many more Mennonite families would have become victims of the famine had it not been for the succor sent to them by family and friends in North America and Europe.

By suppressing and destroying many of the economic, political, social, religious, and cultural foundations of the Ukrainian and Crimean Mennonite community, the Soviet regime successfully severed many of the ties that had bound the Mennonites to their identity, their sense of peoplehood, and their past. Although improved economic conditions immediately after the famine of 1932-1933 instilled hope in some Mennonites that some of their ties to tradition and history could be reestablished, this was not to be. In 1936, a new reign of oppression and inhumanity commonly referred to as the "Great Terror and Purge" was to overtake and dominate the lives of Soviet Mennonites until the outbreak of World War II. During this new cycle of terror and brutality, large segments of the Mennonite population in Ukraine and the Crimea would again be subject to imprisonment, exile, and execution. Many of those who survived this terror and were allowed to remain in Ukraine and the Crimea were later forcibly deported to western Siberia and Central Asia in 1941-1942 after the German Wehrmacht invaded Ukraine in June of 1941. The Soviet regime justified the evacuation of thousands of Mennonites and other ethnic German peasants with the argument that the German minority in Ukraine and the Crimea had been and would continue collaborating with the Nazis and acting as their German fifth column behind Soviet lines. Some Mennonites and ethnic Germans who were not evacuated by the Soviets and remained in the Nazi-occupied zones did collaborate with the Nazis, and were allowed to migrate to Germany when the German army began its retreat in 1943-1944. At the end of the war, a number of these Soviet Mennonites and Germans were able to emigrate to North and

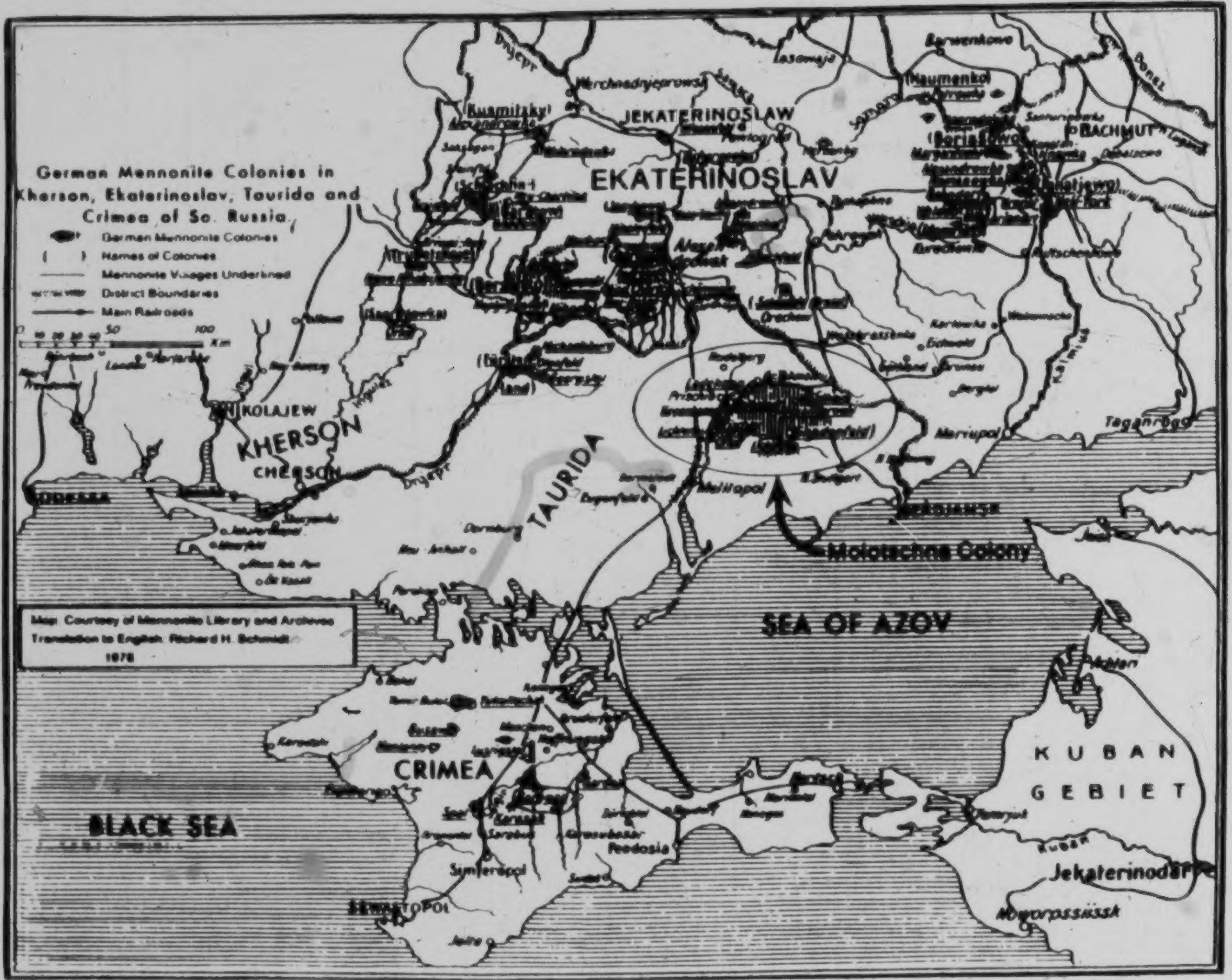
South Americas, but others were repatriated to the Soviet Union. Many of the Mennonite repatriates were accused of collaborating with the enemy and were subsequently executed, imprisoned, or exiled to special settlements. Those who survived this ordeal were eventually released in 1955 when the Soviet regime granted a general amnesty to ethnic Germans accused of collaborating with the Nazis. The released repatriates were allowed to return to their families who had been relocated in various regions of the Soviet Union, but they were not allowed to return to Ukraine or the Crimea, or to seek compensation for the loss of personal property. In new surroundings and with very little property of their own, these Soviet Mennonites began to rebuild their lives that had been so disrupted by the events of the past thirty years.[2]

In the decades following World War II, the Soviet Mennonite community never regained the sense of identity and history that had once existed in the Mennonite community in Ukraine and Crimea prior to 1928. Through the dekulakization and collectivization campaigns, the famine, the purges, the war, and the forced resettlement, Ukrainian and Crimean Mennonites lost a sense of peoplehood that was rooted in their religious traditions and creeds of the past. This is not to say that the Soviet Mennonite community in the 1950's and 1960's did not have its own understanding of what it meant to be a Mennonite; the Mennonites living in the post-Stalinist era did have their own sense of religious consciousness and Mennonite identity, but this sense of consciousness and identity developed in response to their new environment rather than according to the precedents established by their Mennonite forefathers. In this respect, the period between 1928 and 1933 proved to be one of the most important watersheds in the history of the Mennonite people in Russia and the Soviet Union. It was a period of time that marked not only the end of the Mennonite sojourn in Ukraine and the Crimea, but also the end of the Mennonite identity that had developed in prerevolutionary Russia; at the same time, this period marked the beginning of a new era of Mennonitism that would eventually come into its own by the middle of the twentieth century.

Endnotes for Chapter VI

1 Toews, *Czars, Soviets and Mennonites*, p. 178.

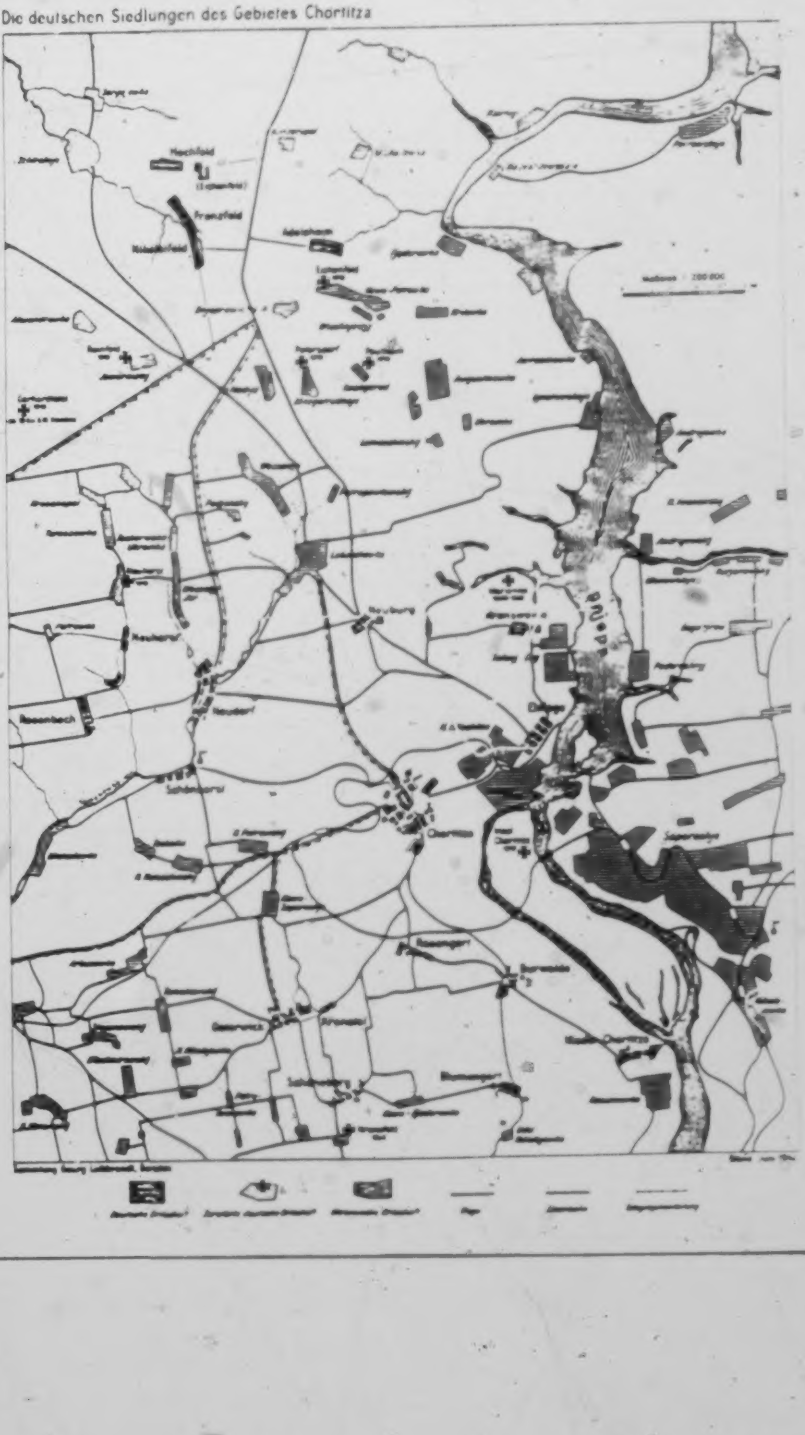
2 *Ibid*., pp. 163-183; Buchsweiler, *Volksdeutsche in der Ukraine*, pp. 276-364; Fleischhauer, *Das Dritte Reich und die Deutschen in der Sowjetunion*, pp. 47-243; Fleischhauer and Pinkus, *The Soviet Germans, Past and Present*, pp. 62-102. See also Walter Sawatsky, *Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II* (Kitchener, Ontario: Herald Press, 1981).

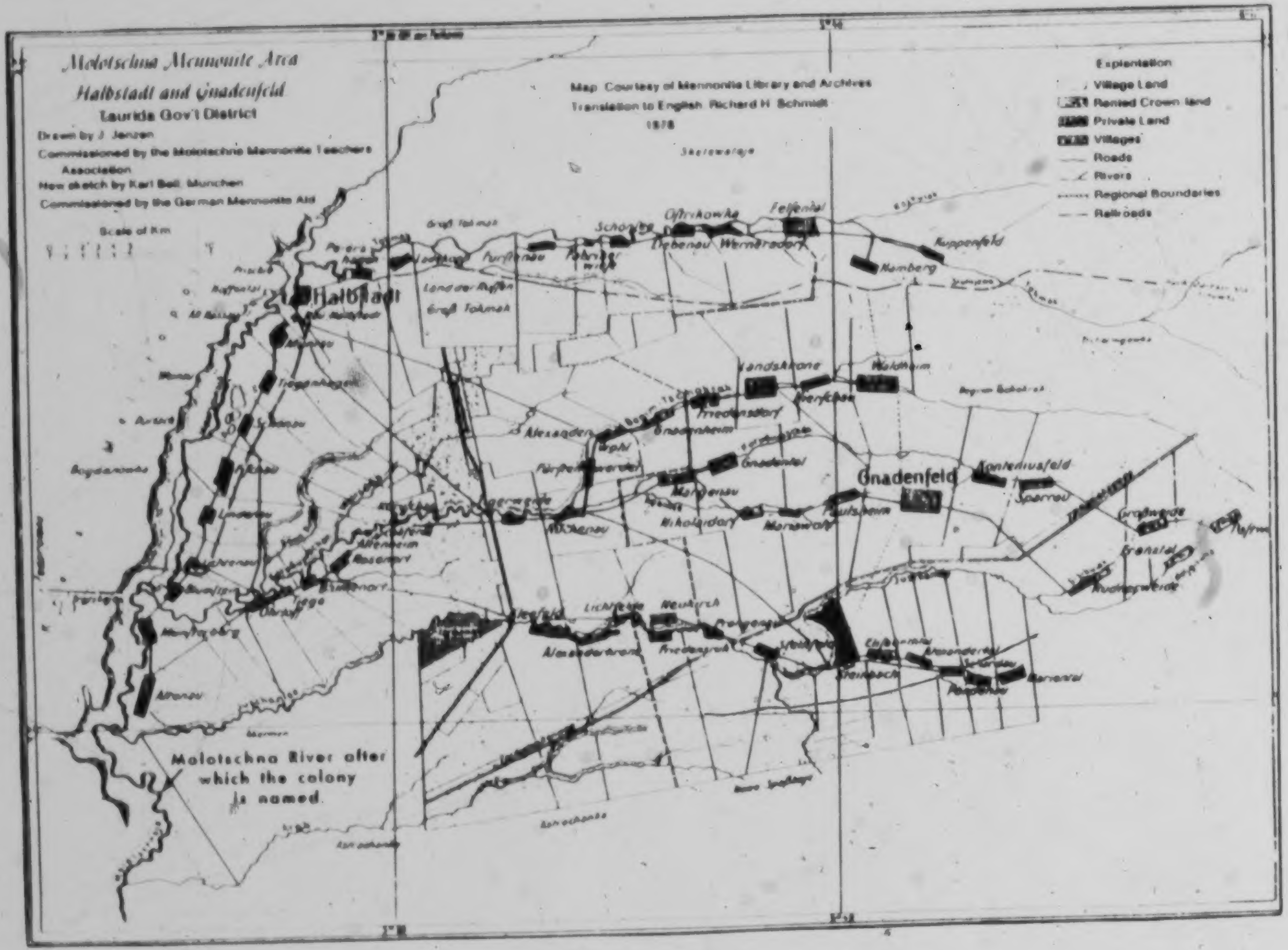


German Mennonite Colonies in Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, Taurida and Crimea of So. Russia.

Map: Courtesy of Mennonite Library and Archives
Translation to English: Richard H. Schmidt
1978

Die deutschen Siedlungen des Gebietes Chortitza




Molotschna Mennonite Area
Halbstadt and Gnadenfeld
Taurida Gov't District
Drawn by J. Janzen
Commissioned by the Molotschna Mennonite Teachers Association
New sketch by Karl Bell, Munchen
Commissioned by the German Mennonite Aid
Scale of Km
Map Courtesy of Mennonite Library and Archives
Translation to English Richard H. Schmidt
1978
Explantation
Village Land
Rented Crown land
Private Land
Villages
Roads
Rivers
Regional Boundaries
Railroads
Halbstadt
Gnadenfeld
Felsental
Schonsee
Liebenau
Wernersdorf
Kuppenfeld
Hamberg
Landskrone
Waldheim
Friedensdorf
Nikolaidorf
Mariawohl
Paulsheim
Sparrau
Rudnerweide
Franztal
Lichtfelde
Neukirch
Alexanderwohl
Friedensruh
Steinbach
Rosenort
Tiege
Altonau
Groß Tokmak
Molotschna River after which the colony is named.

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"Alexanderfeld (Kronau)," container 146, reel 1, images 43-82.

"Alexanderkrone (Kronau)," container 154, reel 9, images 1-19.

"Altonau (Kronau)," container 149, reel 4, images 264-301.

"Blumenfeld (Nikopol)," container 152, reel 7, images 273-301.

"Blumengart (Chortitza)," container 146, reel 1, images 159-188.

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"Grünfeld (Kriwoj Rog)," container 150, reel 5, images 286-351.

"Hochfeld (Chortitza)," container 147, reel 1, images 640-673.

"Hochfeld (Kriwoj Rog)," container 150, reel 5, images 352-383.

"Karlinowka (Boshedarowka)," container 153, reel 8, images 31-61.

"Kronstal (Chortitza)," container 147, reel 2, images 83-111.

"Kronsweide (Chortitza)," container 147, reel 2, images 112-159.

"Neu-Chortitza (Pjatichatki)," container 150, reel 5, images 167-218.

"Neuenberg (Chortitza)," container 147, reel 2, images 234-265.

"Neuendorf (Chortitza)," container 150, reel 4, images 517-585.

"Neu-Halbstadt (Kronau)," container 149, reel 4, images 231-263.

"Neuhorst (Chortitza)," container 150, reel 4, images 586-604.

"Neu-Schönsee (Kronau)," container 149, reel 4, images 448-476.

"Nikolaifeld (Kronau)," container 149, reel 4, images 302-373.

"Ohrloff (Kronau)," container 149, reel 4, images 401-447.

"Osterwick (Chortitza)," container 152, reel 7, images 222-272.

"Pjatichatki District General Report," container 150, reel 5, images 1-39.

"Reinfeld (Kronau)," container 149, reel 4, images 374-400.

"Rosengart (Chortitza)," container 148, reel 2, images 450-486.

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"Schönau (Kronau)," container 154, reel 8, images 539-596.

"Schöneberg (Chortitza)," container 152, reel 7, images 194-221.

"Schönhorst (Chortitza)," container 150, reel 4, images 605-640.

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Appendix

The following tables provide population, economic, agricultural, and emigration statistics pertaining to Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea during the 1920's. The information contained in these charts and tables can be found in two sources: 1) B. B. Janz, "Was andere ueber die Not der Mennoniten unter dem Bolschewismus in Ruszland gesagt haben," B. B. Janz Collection, Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba, pp. 1-66; 2) Adolf Ehrt, *Das Mennonitentum in Russland von seiner Einwanderung bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: Verlag Julius Beltz, 1932), pp. 119-162.

Population Statistics

Table A: Approximate population figures for ten of the most important Mennonite settlements in Ukraine in 1922.

	Area	Number of People
1.	Halbstadt	18,000
2.	Gnadenfeld	12,500
3.	Chortitza	12,000
4.	Sagradovka	5,000
5.	Nikopol	3,600
6.	Grünfeld	3,200
7.	Neu York	2,900
8.	Nikolaipol	1,700
9.	Schönwiese	900
10.	Berdjansk	200
	Total	60,000

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Table B: Approximate Number of Mennonites in Ukraine and the Crimea in 1922.

1.	Approximate Number of Mennonites from the Ten Major Mennonite settlements	60,000
2.	Approximate Number of Mennonites from other Mennonite Settlements in Ukraine	15,000
3.	Approximate Number of Mennonites - in the Crimea	4,800
	Total	79,800

Table C: Approximate Number of Mennonites in the U.S.S.R. in 1922.

1. Approximate Number of Mennonites in Ukraine and Crimea	79,800
2. Approximate Number of Mennonites in Other Regions of the U.S.S.R.	40,200
Total	120,000

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Table D: Number of Mennonites in Ukraine who belonged to or were affiliated with the Mennonite churches in Ukraine in October, 1926 (statistics are from the *Kommission für Kirchenangelegenheiten* Conference held in Melitopol in October of 1926).

	Molotschna Region	Other Regions in Ukraine	Total
Male Members	4,224	5,799	10,023
Female Members	5,239	7,226	12,465
Next of Kin	8,884	15,458	24,342
Totals	18,347	28,483	46,830

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Table E: Number of Mennonites Who Emigrated from the Soviet Union between 1928 and December 1929.

Emigration Totals	With the Help of Mennonite Emigration Agencies	By Their Own Means	Total
1. Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated to Canada.			
July 1923 to June 1924	2,759	---	2,759
June 1924 to Sept. 1925	3,927	1,121	5,048
Sept. 1925 to March 1926	2,323	1,350	3,673
March 1926 to April 1927	2,479	3,207	5,686
April 1927 to April 1928	345	378	723
April 1928 to April 1929	413	94	507
April 1929 to Nov. 1929	248	9	257
Total Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated to Canada between July 18, 1923 and November 25, 1929.	12,494	6,159	18,653
2. Total Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated to Mexico between July 18, 1923 and November 25, 1929.	---	---	475
3. Total Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated from the U.S.S.R., via Moscow in November and December, 1929.	---	---	3,845
4. Total Number of the Registered Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated from the U.S.S.R., between 1923 and 1929.	---	---	22,973
5. Approximate Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated from the territory of the U.S.S.R., between 1918 and 1922.	---	---	500
6. Total Number of Soviet Mennonites Who Migrated from U.S.S.R., between 1918 and 1929.	---	---	23,473

Table F: Population and Emigration Figures of Soviet Mennonites between 1918 and 1923 Rounded Off to the Nearest One Hundred.

Period	Population Total	Population Increase	Number Emigrated		Remaining Population
		(Within 2.8%)	Total	Percentage	
1918-22	---	---	500	---	120,000
1923-24	120,000	3,500	2,800	2.3	120,700
1924-25	120,700	3,500	5,000	4.1	119,200
1925-26	119,200	1,700	3,800	3.2	117,100
1926-27	117,100	3,000	5,900	5.0	114,200
1927-28	114,200	3,000	800	0.7	116,400
1928-29	116,400	3,000	500	0.4	118,900
Apr. 26 to Dec. 31, 1929	118,900	3,000	4,100	2.9	117,800
1923-29	120,000	20,700	22,900		117,800

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Economic and Agricultural Statistics

Table G: Number of Agricultural Societies in Mennonite Colonies in Ukraine in 1925 and 1926.

Cattle Breeding Societies................	52 (minimum number)
Machine (Tractor) Societies..............	20 (minimum number)
Co-operative Societies..................	3 (minimum number)
Seed Improvement Societies..............	1 (minimum number)
Total Number of Societies...............	76 (minimum number)

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Table H: Number of Governing Associations in Mennonite Colonies in Ukraine in 1925 and 1926

Local Central Associations (*Raions*)	13
Central Headquarters........................	1
Total Number of Governing Associations......	14

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Table I: Individual Central Associations (Raions) and the Number of Agricultural Societies (Soc.) and Cooperative Stores in Each of the Mennonite-Populated Raions in 1925 and 1926.

Raion	Cattle Breeding Soc.	Machine (Tractor) Soc.	Seed Improv. Soc.	Co-operative Soc.	Co-operative Stores
1. Halbstadt	23				8
2. Chortitza	6				8
3. Gnadenfeld	10				4
4 Sagradovka	11	1 Tractor	1		
5. Neu York	?				
6. Schönwiese	?				6
7. Memrik	?	13 Tractor			
8. Grünfeld	2	3 Machine		1	
9. Nikolaipol				1	
10 Barwenkovo					
11 Olgafeld		2 Machine		1	
12 Jekaterinoslav					
13 Odessa					

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Table J: Approximate Number of Mennonite Households (in Mennonite-Populated Raions in Ukraine) Which Belonged to the Verband der Bürger Holländischer Herkunft at the Beginning of 1926.

Raion	Number of Households	
1. Halbstadt	1,676	
2. Chortitza	1,255	
3. Gnadenfeld	650	(approximately)
4. Sagradovka	600	(approximately)
5. Neu York	347	
6. Schönwiese	550	(approximately)
7. Memrik	400	(approximately)
8. Grünfeld	400	(approximately)
9. Nikolaipol	280	
10. Barwenkovo	200	(approximately)
11. Olgafeld	150	(approximately)
12. Others	100	(approximately)
Total	3,558	
Estimated Additional Households	3,050	
Approximate Total Number of Households	6,608	

According to B. B. Janz, these 6,608 households corresponded to approximately 46,000 Mennonites who were members of the Verband der Bürger Holländischer Herkunft in Ukraine.

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Table K: The Average Number of Persons per Horse in the Major Mennonite Colonies in Ukraine in 1922.

Colony	Persons per Horse
1. Halbstadt	12.0
2. Nikolaipol	8.5
3. Chortitza	7.0
4. Gnadenfeld	7.0
5. In Other Colonies	4.5 to 5.0

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Table L: The Average Number of Horses Per Farm in the Major Mennonite Colonies in Ukraine in 1922.

Colony	Horses per Farm
1. Halbstadt	0.6
2. Nikolaipol	0.8
3. Chortitza	1.0
4. Gnadenfeld	1.0
5. In Other Colonies	1.5

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Table M: Average Number of Head of Livestock per Mennonite Farm in the Molotschna Area between 1914 and 1927.

Year	Horses	Cattle	Sheep
1914	5.6	4.4	0.9
1917	4.4	3.9	0.7
1920	2.2	2.7	1.8
1923	1.4	2.7	2.2
1927	2.4	3.5	1.1

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Vita

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- Completion of Plumber and Gasfitter Apprenticeship (1982)
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- Bachelor of Religious Studies, Mennonite Brethren College of Arts (1986)
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